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WOMEN IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

A Reply

TO BISHOP DOANE, AND OTHERS.

BY

ELLEN BATTELLE DIETRICK.

Philadelphia:
ALFRED J. FERRIS.
1897.

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D56

TO ALL COURAGEOUS WOMEN
WHO DESIRE TO PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS,
THIS STUDY OF THE CHILDHOOD OF ORTHODOXY
IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

Preface.

"These are religious beliefs, which having been handed down to them traditionally by their ancestors, they persist in maintaining, ay, and defending, most pertinaciously; nor do they consider of what sort they are, but hold confidently that they are tried and true, simply for the reason that their elders have transmitted them. And so great is the authority of antiquity that to enquire into it is deemed a crime!"

LACTANTIUS, *Institutes*, II., 6.

"Let us be true with ourselves, come what may to our theology."

REV. LYMAN ABBOTT, D.D., *Evolution of Christianity.*

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day, and cease to be."

TENNYSON, *In Memoriam.*

"Is it wonderful that man should err in making a law, or come to his senses in rejecting it?"

TERTULLIAN.

"The first measure of a mind is its capacity of truth and its adhesion to it."

EMERSON, *Progress of Culture.*

"Seek and ye shall find."

PYTHIAN PRIESTESS.

"Wherefore also we are rightly condemned if we do not distinguish what is hostile and unseemly and unnatural and false from what is true, consistent, and seemly and according to Nature."

CLEMENT of Alexandria, *Miscellanies*, Book VII., chap. 15.

"Only by making the ruling few uneasy can the oppressed many obtain a particle of relief."

BENTHAM.

"If they go on withholding and forbearing, and hesitating whether this is the time for discussion or that is the time, they will be laughed at another century as fools, and kicked for another century as slaves."

SYDNEY SMITH.

"I often fancy that the judgments which will be passed upon us in the valley of Jehoshaphat, will be neither more nor less than those of women, countersigned by the Almighty."

RENAN, *Recollections of My Youth.*"

WOMEN IN THE EARLY CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

Women in the Early Christian Ministry.

Bishop Doane, a high priest in a modern priesthood of high pretensions, has recently distinguished himself by a fresh attempt to expound "the will of God" concerning the "vocation of womanhood"—a perennial task, with which the priests of Christendom have busied themselves and edified womankind for some eighteen hundred years. It is needless to say, that Bishop Doane maintains the interesting unanimity with which his brethren agree that God has given man (male man) dominion over all living things, and that "the very master, man," is the dictator who must prescribe "woman's sphere" and prevent her straying therefrom. The good Bishop pronounces the garden story in Genesis, chapters second and third, a story "full of dignity," a true "parable of human life!" Filled with uneasiness in view of the fact that modern women are beginning to refuse those second-hand "revelations of God's will," which come to them through the imperfect medium of mortal men, and are, consequently, deciding to take their own government into their own hands, Bishop Doane has made a last, despairing effort to crowd womanhood back into the mould de-

vised by men, and to prop up the crumbling wall by which, for some hundreds of years past, men have sought to sharply divide adult human rights, duties and privileges into two classes, male and female.

The Bishop is opposed to hearing even the voice of all the male people in regard to the people's affairs, considering "an enlarged unqualified suffrage" (that is, a full expression of opinion) to be an "aggravated misery" and a "threatening danger," and he claims that there is only a limited number of men in America (himself doubtless included) who are "qualified to govern." How naturally, therefore, is he filled with horror at the prospect of officially recognizing the opinions of the female people in the administration of their affairs. He exclaims, "One gets sick and tired of the way in which the talk of woman's vocation fills the air, not merely in the wild vagaries of its blatant assumptions, but in the parade and push of its claims for recognition of what are called its 'rights.' I have had occasion here, a year ago, to say what wrong to womanhood these rights would be." It is wonderful to note how similarly all members of the ruling class are affected, whenever the subjected class begins to claim rights. John grew very sick and tired considering the wild vagaries of the blatant assumptions of the barons; the pope grew

very sick and tired in the parade and push of Luther's claims for recognition of what he called the right of private judgment; George the Third got still more sick and tired when the Americans filled the air with their clamors for self-government; and now it is women's unhappy destiny to make men sick and tired by holding before them the logical conclusion of their own political premises! The latest rebels can only console themselves with the reflection that sick men do get well, and that tired men do get rested when political truth and health are once firmly established.

Wrought to prophetic heights by the shocking disrespect which the leaders of insubordinate womanhood show to the "dignified" serpent story of the rabbis, Bishop Doane thus foretells what is going to happen when women are allowed to express their own opinions: "When a new Bible shall have been translated into a denial of the original record of creation—a really 'reversed Scripture,' as one once called the 'revised version'—when constitutions shall have been altered to disturb the equipoise of the relation between man and woman; when motherhood shall be replaced by mannishness; when neglected homes shall furnish candidates for mismanaged offices; when money shall buy the votes of women, as it does now themselves; when the fires of

political discord shall be lighted on the hearthstone of domestic peace; when the arrogant assertion of demanded rights shall have destroyed the instinctive chivalry of conceded courtesies; when 'woman,' as has been well said, 'once the superior, has become the equal of man,' then the reaped whirlwind of some violent political reaction will be gathered 'in tears' by those who are sowing the wind, in the mad joy of the French revolutions."

As an appendix, the Bishop sends out a letter, declaring, "And the Church, of course, could never tolerate the thought of the admission of women into her ministry." But, as the Church, undoubtedly, can do in this respect what the Church has done, Bishop Doane's assertion is somewhat over-confident; for it can easily be shown that the Christian Church admitted women into her regularly ordained ministry during the first two hundred years of Christianity. Whether Bishop Doane is ignorant of this fact, or whether he is merely presuming upon women's ignorance thereof, it is impossible to say. But one thing is clear, and that is, that the time has arrived when all women should be informed of the true status of their sex in the ministry of the primitive Church.

The first important truth for them to learn concerning the question is that there is a missing link

of some five hundred years between the close of that body of literature known to us as the "Old Testament," and the compilation of that collection of letters, narratives, etc., now presented to us as the "New Testament." Girls of Christian families are commonly inoculated in their ignorant, and therefore helplessly credulous youth, with unquestioning belief that the New Testament was written in the first century of our era, by disciples who were contemporary with Jesus, and that Peter and Paul were first century Christians, the former of whom had personally known and followed Jesus, while the latter was a convert from Judaism after Jesus' death, never having seen the teacher himself.

Yet he is, indeed, a very ignorant ecclesiastic who to-day is not perfectly well aware that the above belief is pure theory, resting on nothing more stable than vague conjecture, irresponsible tradition, and slowly evolving fable. Among scholarly Christian theologians no questions are now more unsettled than are the queries: Who wrote the Gospels? In which of the first three centuries did they assume their present shape? And at what time did Peter and Paul live and quarrel with each other concerning Christian polity? Here we find ourselves not at all in a region of certainty, a region of well-grounded

historical facts established by known witnesses of reputable credibility, but in the dusky realm of blindly groping guesses, of which the most that can be said is that such or such a conjecture is probable. Men have long been guessing from the standpoint of masculine predilections. It is time now that women should avail themselves of similar liberty, and should form their own conclusions as to what were the probabilities in regard to the state of affairs in the rise and growth of the ethics of Jesus.

The Rev. Dr. Edwin Hatch expresses the latest decision of historical theology concerning Paul in frankly confessing, "His life at Rome and *all the rest of his history* are enveloped in mists from which no single gleam of certain light emerges. . . . The place and occasion of his death are not less uncertain than are the facts of his later life. . . . The chronology of the rest of his life is as uncertain as the date of his death. We have no means of knowing when he was born, or how long he lived, or at what date the several events of his life took place." Exactly the same may be said of Peter. The strongest probability is that Paul and Peter were two obscure men who lived in the latter part of the first, or beginning of the second century, neither of whom could have seen the first century Jesus, but each of

whom as converts led primitive Christian thought, Paul on a broad and non-Jewish, Peter on a narrow and Judaistic, basis.

If women will thoughtfully consider what is now in process in the development of Theosophy, or of that which calls itself Christian science, it will help them greatly to comprehend the probable formation of that which is entitled the New Testament, and also the slow and stormy development of the Church. In the case of early Christianity, there was probably even more confusion, strife and difference of opinion than exists respectively within the ranks of the Theosophists and the Christian science disciples, for the reason that Jesus never wrote a line in exposition of his ethics, and not a line concerning himself, his deeds, or his doctrines has yet been traced to the century in which he lived. All that any one knows of Jesus and his teachings is found in miscellaneous and anonymous writings, which were not collected and formally accepted under the titles they now bear until about three hundred years after the time supposed to have been the date of his death. I say "supposed," for even the date and manner of Jesus' death is a matter of most uncertain tradition, and our theologians are divided between conjecture as to whether he really was put to death, as was stated in the cen-

tury following, or whether the theory of his death on the cross was built upon some misunderstood passages of Jewish and Pagan literature. But one hundred years after the death of a person whose own contemporaries do not even mention him, and who leaves no written record of his own history, is the same as 2,000 so far as authority goes. An educated woman of to-day is better qualified to form a reasonable opinion of what is probably true concerning the life and teachings of Jesus and the foundation of Christianity than were the manifestly over-credulous men whose writings are scattered from the middle of the second to the latter part of the fourth century, not a syllable of which comes to us in an original manuscript.

Yet it is chiefly upon the testimony of those fallible, uncritical and greatly superstitious writers,—Origen, Tertullian, Augustine, Jerome, Rufinus, Gregory, Cyril, Jerome, and Eusebius of Cæsarea,—that such dogmatists as Bishop Doane depend for information as to what transpired nearly two hundred years before any one of them had come into existence. The disingenuous character of the teaching commonly placed before Christian women will be readily detected when they learn that the entire fabric of authority for the assumed succession of wri-

ters from the assumed "twelve apostles" rests upon the unsupported assertions of the third century Irenæus, whose works are lost, and whom the world knows only through the quotations of the fourth century Eusebius, a man who is conceded by all to stand self-betrayed as a weak, vain, credulous man, a flatterer of the wickedly cruel Emperor Constantine, and a deliberate misquoter of the historian Josephus. It is upon this broken reed that theological, ecclesiastical and dogmatic Christendom leans, for, as Professor C. E. Stowe, D.D., pathetically says, "Reject Eusebius, and what have we for a history of the Christian churches of the first three centuries, or of the books used as Scriptures in those churches?" *

When a modern commentator tells a woman that there were four "Apostolic Fathers" (that is, Fathers of the Church who were contemporary with and who knew the reputed "twelve Apostles"), he ought also to inform her that this statement rests solely upon the *ipse dixit* of the fourth century Eusebius, and that there is no proof whatever either that the primitive Christian society had any special "twelve Apostles" appointed by Jesus, or that any four "Apostolic Fathers" succeeded twelve apostles. As the can-

* "Origin and History of the Books of the Bible," page 47.

did Bishop Stillingfleet frankly confesses concerning the pretentious theory of "Apostolic succession," it is "as muddy as the Tiber. . . . .From the loss of records we cannot draw down the succession of bishops to our time from the apostles' time." * In short, that is another region of pure guess-work.

I have dwelt upon this fact of a missing link between Jesus and his ecclesiastical adherents of the second, third and fourth centuries, inasmuch as a peculiar reason exists why women should critically examine the claims of modern theologians concerning early Christian literature, as endorsed by the "Church Fathers." Therein is found the assertion, several times repeated, that women are "divinely ordained" to be in subjection to men, and a long line of Christian commentators have affirmed that that assertion is the utterance of divinely inspired writers, Paul and Peter, who are said to be veritable mouthpieces for the Creator of the universe.

The attempt to gain "divine" authority for the subjection of women to men is by no means confined to Christian theologians. As Strabo naïvely wrote of men's tricks and manners (early in the first century of our era): "What is marvellous in fable is sometimes employed to please, and sometimes to in-

* "Irenicum," part II., ch. 6.

spire terror, and both of these are of use, not only with children, but with persons of mature age. To children we propose delightful fictions in order to encourage them to act well, and such as are terrible in order to restrain them from evil. . . . It is impossible to conduct women and the gross multitude, and to render them pious, holy and upright by the precepts of reason and philosophy; superstition, or the fear of the Gods, must be called to aid. . . . . The whole ancient theology is all fable which the legislators employ as bugbears to overawe the credulous and simple."

Singularly enough, the "ancient theology" to which Strabo referred, was, originally, promulgated by women (sibyls, priestesses and prophetesses) to overawe and conduct simple and credulous *men* and the gross multitude; but the tables were pretty effectually turned in Greece and Rome, at the time when Strabo wrote, and new doctrines concerning women had been successfully disseminated among those whose forefathers had cherished that ancient theology. We find the same transformation in Hindu and in Jewish theology, but I cannot follow this subject farther here. I mention it only to throw a sidelight upon the fact that the subjection-of-woman doctrine has no warrant whatever in the teachings

ascribed to Jesus, and will not stand the test of an examination of what is given us as the record of Paul. Paul can be made to admit, "Mine own mouth shall condemn me."

The Rev. Dr. Geddes, a scholarly Roman Catholic divine, has well said: "It is time, it is full time, that Christianity should learn to walk alone, without Jewish leading-strings or Gentile go-carts. It is time that the pure, spiritual religion of Jesus should throw aside all the tawdry, cumbersome load of exotic ornaments, borrowed either from Judaism or Paganism,—from the temple of Jerusalem or the temples of Jupiter,—and reclothe herself in the white, spotless robes in which she was originally invested. It is time for her rational admirers to vindicate her chaste character from the aspersions of her professed enemies, and from the false praise of her pretended friends; for the false praise of pretended friends has been often more injurious to her reputation than the obloquy of her professed enemies; or, rather, she has had no enemies, but because her pretended friends have exhibited her in a dress which she disclaims and despises. Strip her at once of this ungainly, meretricious garb; restore her to her primitive simplicity; and she will need only to be seen, to be admired, loved, idolised."

So far as we can judge from the scanty and imperfect traditions which the widely differing sects of primitive Christianity have handed down to us, Jesus, the son of the Jewess, Mary, and of the Jew, Joseph, seems to have been a humble street-preacher, chiefly bent on protesting against the social evils of Jerusalem, evils which had developed as a result of great disparity in wealth and education between the masses and their rulers, the priests, scribes, and elders of Judaism, and the priestesses, augurs, senators and emperors of Rome. Neither the priestly ambition, greed, hypocrisy and tyranny, the evils to the masses resulting therefrom, nor the protests, were new things in human history. Five hundred years previous the same causes had produced the same results in India. Gautama's revolt from the despotism of Brahminism was but a forerunner of Jesus' revolt from Judaism, as Luther's outbreak, fifteen hundred years after Jesus, was a protest against Roman Catholicism, and as Quakerism and Methodism, later on, were protests against the despotism of officialised and politically upheld Protestantism. While mankind exists, like causes will continue to produce like results, though, the more enlightened the people, the less is the danger of the deification of the Protestor who rises to deliver the poor from priestly tyranny and deceit.

As Gautama, the Buddha (i.e., the "Enlightened") had simply sought to free the ignorant masses of India from superstitious subjection to those who "for a pretense make long prayers," so Jesus, the Christ ("i.e., the "Consecrated"), apparently labored solely for the same end, constantly teaching men and women that the only true kingdom of heaven is within the human mind, that it is generated by common love for good and love for our fellows, and that knowledge of this truth will set mankind free from the pretences of all priests. Jesus was a revolutionist, a rebel and a free-thinker. He defied ecclesiastical law, scorned ecclesiastical ceremonies, rejected the despotic claims which the Asiatic family system imposed upon the individual—constraining each son and daughter to follow blindly the behests of parental custom*—and, above all, did he pour fierce denunciation upon those false guides of the people who "say and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. All their works they do for to be seen of men:.... they love the uppermost places at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and deferent greetings

* This form of human despotism still continues in Asia, constituting a dreadful barrier to natural growth.

in the markets, and to be called of men, Master, Master." Jesus himself neither established a church, nor asked for or received any salary, and he formulated no shadow of a system of theology. It is most unlikely that he ever selected any special "twelve" as his successors, for, as will be shown, every one who embraced his ideas was expected to become a successor in his teaching. He taught that no teller of newly-discovered, or re-discovered, truths can expect an ignorant, prejudiced and cowardly society to speak well of his or her message, and that the only reward to be looked for in serving truth is the reward of one's own conscience. When that young man of the working class began to interest himself in the condition of society, what did he find that condition to be? He found Jewish society divided into a ruling sex and a subjected sex: into a dominant few living in wealth, ease and luxury upon the taxes and tithes wrung from the illiterate, superstitious many,* and an oppressed many whose carefully inculcated habits of reverence prevented their questioning the despotism of the few. He found Jewish marriage a system of joining young and ignorant girls to men of superior age and knowledge, according to the desires

* The Jews were then scattered through many countries, but, wherever they were, every Jew was required to send an annual poll-tax of half a shekel to the priestly headquarters in the temple at Jerusalem!

of men and the ambition, greed or convenience of families, with no reference whatever to the natural suitability of those thus joined together. He found knowledge a preserve into which only a few were encouraged to enter, the few who agreed that knowledge must be withheld from the masses, if the masses are to be retained in obedient slavery. He found the "grace of patience" preached by those who did not practice it, preached for the sake of keeping the masses quiet; the "headship of man" preached by arrogant man himself to uneducated women; the "modesty of humility" impressed by parents upon children, by husbands upon wives, by nobles upon the rabble, by priests upon worshippers, in short by all who found it to their own especial advantage to be served with absolute obsequiousness. He found "respect for law" enjoined by all who wished to uphold laws giving themselves superiority, or other fictitious and artificial bulwarks which would not have been theirs in fair competition between man and man, or between man and woman. He found the "courage of self-restraint" demanded of women by men who had not the faintest notion of practicing any sort of self-restraint themselves.

Did Jesus display reverence for established "constitutions?" Did he respect the pretensions of the lofty few who claim that they are "qualified to govern?" Did he hesitate to disturb Jewish notions of the "equipoise of the relation between man and woman?" Did he bid women to glue themselves "on the hearthstone of neglected peace?" On the contrary, he began, from the start, preaching doctrines which upset all existing arrangements. He said to the teachers of the established constitutions (the very pillars of existing arrangements), O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come! Produce fruits if you have the truth. Boast not of your authority, your knowledge, or your birth. God can raise up the very stones of the street to equal your value. Now the axe is to be laid unto the root of the trees, and every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. What respect for those "qualified to govern" do we find there? We are told that he answered "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's," but, it is not noticed that he left it to the individual to decide what tribute should be Cæsar's. We are often reminded that he said, in reference to marriage, "What God hath joined together, let not man put

asunder," but it is not noticed that he made no mention of priestly or legislative interference in order to discover whether a couple really are joined together by God, or merely by social convention. Whatever the code for man, that, also, he pronounced to be the code for woman. In his views on divorce, on what constitutes adultery, on the punishment for sexual crimes, on the liberty of movement, on the pursuit of knowledge, he makes it clear that he believed in woman's right to share in the pursuits, the pleasures, the professions, the whole life of man—in short, that nothing is lawful for the one which is forbidden to the other. The only woman whom he ever condemned was the domestic drudge who allowed herself to be "cumbered with much serving," to the neglect of a chance to cultivate her mind, and he specially commended her sister who had chosen "the better part" of broadening her intelligence.

Truth, knowledge, and individual judgment were the trinity—the only trinity—advocated by Jesus. He died without having published one solitary theological dogma as essential to salvation, leaving those whom he had instructed in love for purity and love for their fellow-men, perfectly free to believe or disbelieve what their own reason approved. His most

appreciative follower, Paul, especially exhorts all who would become imitators of Jesus to "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Jesus never alluded, even remotely, to the myth of the Garden of Eden, the fall of the human race, or to the tradition of a divine decree of subjection of women to men. His mere teaching of one moral code for both men and women completely demolishes the lordship-of-man theory, for there must be two separate laws where human beings stand in the attitude of master and slave. As the Arabian proverb runs, "What belongs to the master is forbidden to the slave."

The earliest followers of Jesus, the humbly-born Jew, were, doubtless, themselves poor and obscure folks, working people, much like those amongst us to-day who meet to repeat the sayings and revere the memory of some unselfish and unpopular friend of the lowly and heavy-laden. During the whole of the first century, not a single writer of Greece, Rome, or of Palestine, made any mention even of the existence of such a person as Jesus. Neither Jewish nor Roman rulers of that century give any sign of having heard that the friends and followers of Jesus' teaching, after his death, had begun to apply to him the title of "The Anointed," or "The Consecrated," that is, "The Christ"; or to have had the faintest

suspicion that some of these followers were beginning to imitate the Pagan fashion of apotheosising a beloved or revered deceased individual. Strabo, the Greek geographer, Josephus, the Jewish historian, the elder Pliny, Seneca, Lucanus, Flaccus Persius, Juvenal, Martial, Philo, Quintilian, and a host of popular writers flourished, for it was a century of peace, and "a single language formed the common means of communication for all civilized races"—alike for the governing Roman in Rome and the tributary Jew in the Roman province, Palestine.

And yet not a solitary known writer of the first century, Jew or Gentile, manifests any consciousness either of Jesus or of his street preaching in Palestine.

As a modern student comments on the above-mentioned fact, "All of those great writers lived in the first century of our era; [many] of them wrote valuable works on topics closely connected with religious creeds of the different nations of the vast Roman Empire; all of them knew Palestine, some from personal visits to the land, some from the numberless books on travel, on geography, on different peoples, which at that time formed the bulk of general literature, and the titles of which you will find in the tenth volume of the Bibleotheca Græca of I. A. Fabricius. Palestine, at that time, could be reached

in three days from Athens, and in ten days from Brindisi, or in twelve days from Rome. The whole Roman world—and Palestine was then a Roman province—the whole Roman world was intimately connected and knit together by an admirable system of postal stations and conveyances.... [yet] in the numerous and still extant Roman and Greek writings of the first century we cannot find one single line, one single word, in support of the existence of Christianity."

The deification of Jesus was, evidently, a very slow and tardy process, largely due to the influence of the Pagan, instead of Jewish adherents, and, as all know, this deification was not consummated officially, by ecclesiastics in council, until more than four hundred years had rolled by since Jesus' death. It was, to be sure, as the Christians continually reminded the Pagans, a common enough occurrence to apotheosise deceased heroes and heroines, but these were generally of nobly-born or ruling families. The innovation for which the new sect was rebuked lay in deifying a mere workingman, a carpenter and son of a carpenter. In his "Apology" (supposed to have been written about 150 A. D.), Justin Martyr defends the rising belief in Jesus' divinity by reference to the common custom among the Romans of paying divine

honors to notable persons. "The son of God * who is called Jesus," said Justin, "even if only a man in common with others, is worthy for his wisdom of being called the son of God; for all your writers term God the father both of men and Gods." Justin then explains that the terms which Christians apply to Jesus and the things they claim about him, are simply such terms as are common with "you [the Romans] who affirm Hermes to be the Messenger-Word from God," and who attribute suffering to the "Sons of Jupiter," and who affirm that Persius was "born of a Virgin." It is evident, from the second and third century apologies and explanations, that the philosophic Pagans, who, with growing knowledge, had lost faith in deifications, strove to prevent this error from leading Christians astray in regard to Jesus. But prior to the age of printing it was impossible to overtake a new form of an old superstition until it had run its course. Even now we see how difficult it is to controvert the credulous claim of ignorant adorers that some revered teacher or other is possessed of supernatural and superhuman powers, when manifestations of new skill or fresh human abilities are displayed. It is most improbable

* This title, originally, meant no more than "daughter of Eve," "son of Adam," or "child of a heavenly parent," as see in Genesis, chap. 6, ver. 2.

that Jesus made any pretensions to supernatural qualities, as he deprecated even being called "good," declaring that there is none good but one, the ideal Good. The Clementine Homilies assert that Peter explicitly denied that Jesus ever proclaimed "himself to be God." (Homilies XVI. 15.)

The religion of Jesus was, apparently, nothing more than teaching the unity of the human race as children of one, common, ideal Parent, emphasizing this unity from a religious, as Terence, Cicero and others had previously emphasized it from a philosophic, standpoint. Jesus peculiarly popularized the doctrine of the substitution of brotherly and sisterly love as a motive power for the increase of human welfare and happiness, in place of that selfish spirit created and kept alive in every community by the inordinate desire of the few to rule the many. The character of "divineness" in his religion becomes apparent only as each new convert to its beauty and truth, not only intellectually apprehends its high and broad excellence, but puts it into daily practice in human intercourse. Such a religion needs no abstruse theories about the nature of Jesus himself, no dogmas about his paternity, or maternity, no miracles, no "revelations," no temples, no priesthood, as warrant for its own loveliness. In its most important

features, it is identical with the ethics of the Buddha, Gautama. To the open mind it makes its own excellence self-evident.

But there is little cause for wonder that the teacher of such a doctrine 2,000 years ago, finally came to be worshipped as a god by the poor and miserable slaves of Greece, Rome and Palestine, who were ground down into an undistinguishable mass for the aggrandizement of a few bold, strong and unscrupulous families. His unselfish interest in those to whom evil systems of government denied even a chance for self-development, stamped him as, indeed, divine in the sense of being of the highest conceivable human excellence, a fit model for all time, of those who love their fellow men. In the brotherhood instituted by Jesus, neither houses or lands, fame of family, individual rank, sex, nor other wordly considerations, entitled one to supremacy over another. All were children of the human family, equivalent, as are the children of one individual family, however unlike in mental or physical ability. He repudiated the arrogant notions, which seem to have been first implanted among the Jews by Ezra (about 450 B. C.), that the Jews possessed a peculiar title to heavenly favor, that priests, by virtue of their office, are superior to the rest of humanity, and that domestic life must be the

limit of the thoughts of women. Although Jesus did not originate, he specially helped to permanently establish the great idea, that in a truly civilized view of the rights of mankind there can be neither Jew nor Gentile, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female. It was this idea which Paul, above all the early followers of Jesus, most emphasized and widely disseminated, and in this doctrine—that the interests of all races and of both sexes are one—lies the greatest value which Jesus and Paul have rendered to the world.

At the time when Paul's letters were written, it is evident that the offices of Christians were by no means as distinct as we now imagine. In the original Greek, ministers, presbyters, bishops, prophets, evangelists and apostles were all "servants," were of either sex, and were all described by the one word "diakonos," a word which (as the Rev. Dr. W. L. Alexander says) was originally used "to include every kind of service rendered to the church or cause of God on earth." It is true that the old, old question of official superiority was raised among Christians during Paul's time, but he peremptorily rejected the suggestion that the office of one Christian is superior to that of another, replying, rebukingly, "Who is Paul or who Apollos, but servants (diakonia) by whom ye be-

lieved....I have planted, Apollos watered : but God gave the increase."

A "diakonos" was simply any one of the followers of Jesus, less than the leader Jesus, hence the word was subsequently interpreted by the Latin Christians as "minister," or "attendant," or "servant," from the Latin word *minus*, or less. Each diakonos, or follower of Jesus, claimed to be sent as a teacher to mankind by virtue of knowledge of the teachings of Jesus, hence the word was sometimes interpreted by Greek Christians as "apostle," or "one sent," from *apo*, away, and *stello*, I send. Each diakonos, as promulgator of the teachings, was an "evangelist," that is, literally, "announcer of good tidings." Each diakonos was expected to exercise brotherly or sisterly care over the weak, poor or afflicted members of the association, hence was, literally, a "bishop" or "presbyter," that is, an "overseer" of those who needed attention and help from a stronger or older member. Each diakonos warned the careless of the evil result of evil conduct, hence was, literally, a prophet, that is, a preacher of predictions. Sons and daughters, servants and handmaidens alike "prophesied" when animated with the spirit of Jesus. (Acts, chapter 2, verses 17 and 18). I repeat, by way of much-needed emphasis that every diakonos, male or

female, of the primitive Church was an apostle, servant, minister, prophet, evangelist, presbyter or bishop, and originally no one of these was, by virtue of the name "apostle," more important than another. It was not the office which exalted the individual, but it was individuals who magnified the office, and such aggrandizing was the result of slow growth through several centuries. The office of "bishop" is like a certain famous vine,

> "It grew and it grew till it reached the church top,
> And when it could grow no more higher,
> It turned itself there in a conspicuous way
> For all true subjects to admire."

As we shall see farther on, Martin Luther had good cause to declare, "There is something in the office of a bishop which is dreadfully demoralizing. Even good men change their natures at consecration; Satan enters into them, as he entered into Judas, as soon as they have taken the sop." But to return to the primitive Church, a famous diakonos, or apostle, of that simple era was Priscilla, a Jewess, who was one of the theological instructors of Apollos (the fellow-minister, or fellow-servant, to whom Paul refers in his first letter to the Corinthians). There is strong reason to believe that the apostle Priscilla, in co-

operation with her husband, the apostle Aquila, performed the important task of founding the Church of Rome : for Paul, writing to the Christians of that city, admits that he himself has not yet visited that city ; there is no proof whatever that Peter ever went to Rome at all (but, on the contrary, much proof that he wished to confine Christianity to Jewish converts); and yet Paul, hailing Priscilla by the current term which specially active apostles and bishops used in addressing other specially active workers in the apostolate, " Helper in Christ Jesus," eulogizes her as one known, gratefully, by " all the churches of the Gentiles," and recognizes a Church of Rome as established in Priscilla's own house (see Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 16). It is highly probable that that was the tiny acorn from which has grown the present great oak—the Roman Catholic Church, which would profit much by more remembrance and imitation of the modest and undogmatic women who helped to give it being and who nursed it through its infancy.

The inability of modern men to comprehend the position of women in the primitive Church, is strikingly shown in Chalmers' commentary on the fact that Paul used exactly the same title in addressing Priscilla that he uses in greeting Urbane. Although conceding that Priscilla had shared the work of an

apostle in teaching Apollos "the way of God more perfectly," and, although he knows nothing whatever of Urbane's work, yet Chalmers unhesitatingly concludes that Urbane's help to Paul *must* have been in things spiritual, but that Priscilla's *must* have been in regard to things temporal only: and, as Aquila and Priscilla were an inseparable couple, poor Aquila, too, is relegated to Priscilla's assumedly inferior position! There is not, however, the slightest reason for such a conclusion by Chalmers. It is manifestly due to the modern prejudice which renders the Paul-worshipping male Protestants incapable of comprehending that "Our Great Apostle," Paul, was not a great apostle at all, in those days, but a simple, self-sent tent-maker with a vigorous spirit, who gladly shared the "apostolic dignity" with all the good women he could rally to his assistance. Chalmers conjectures that if Priscilla really did help Paul, it must have been as "a teacher of women and children," even while the fact stares him in the face that she was a recognized teacher of the man whom Paul specially and emphatically pronounces his own equal. (Compare Acts, chap. 18, v. 26, with 1st Cor. chap. 3.)

To one who uses unbiased common sense in regard to the New Testament records, there can be no question of women's activity and prominence in the early

ministry. Paul not only virtually pronounces Priscilla a fellow-apostle and fellow-bishop (Romans, chap. 16, verses 3-5), but specially commends Phœbe, a Greek woman, as a minister (diakonos), which, as we have seen, may be legitimately interpreted either presbyter, bishop, or apostle. That it was well understood, throughout the whole Church, that women had shared the labors of the apostles, is evidenced by Chrysostom's specific eulogy thereupon. Phœbe was the bishop of the Church in Cenchrea, and that she was both a powerful and useful overseer in the episcopate, Paul testifies in affirming that she had not only been a helper to him, but to many others also. (Romans, chap. 16, verses 1-2.) Addressing that first Church of Rome (which was in the house of Priscilla and Aquila before Paul, or Peter, or the barely-mentioned Linus, are heard of in Rome), Paul indicates the equality of male and female apostles by mentioning in one and the same category Priscilla and Aquila, Andronicus and Junia,* Mary, "who bestowed much labor among you," Amphis, Urbane, Tryphena and Tryphosa, Persis, Julia, Rufus, Hermas, and so on, mingling male and female apostles indis-

* Who were probably, also, husband and wife, whom Paul pronounces "of note among the apostles," and who were workers in the apostolate before Paul himself entered the field.

crimately. The significance of this category is fully revealed only when we remember that Hermas has since figured largely, among his special admirers, as an "Apostolic Father." Later we shall see why the "Apostolic Mothers" have not yet received the share of fame to which their labors equally entitled them.

The earliest mention of Christianity by any Pagan writer is found among the letters of Pliny, the Younger, in the second century. Sent by the Emperor Trajan to investigate the doings of the Christians, Pliny reported, officially, that he found *women in the ministry of the Church.* It may be beneficial to recall to Bishop Doane's mind what very humbly-born ministers those were, too, whom the elegant Pliny discovered conducting the ecclesiastical services of young Christianity. Those fellow-laborers of Paul, the tent-maker, and of Peter and Andrew, the fishermen, were two lowly maid-servants, probably on the same worldy plane with the obscure, simple women who now labor among us in the Salvation Army, women of strong character and zealous desire to help their fellows, but little-adorned with Schools of Divinity equipment or episcopal insignia of office.

That was still the day of Christianity's poverty. Paul boasted that he earned his own living, that, although theoretically, he held that it was not right to

"muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn," and though it was customary that they which minister about holy things shall feed on the things of the temple, and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar of the gifts placed thereon, yet, that he had himself neither used any of these things nor written thus "that it should be so done unto me." He declared that he made his "warfare" against evil at his own expense, that he worked night and day that he might not burden any of them, preaching without reward save the work done. No ecclesiastical palaces then stood ready for pompous bishops; no House of Lords welcomed them as Peers of the Proud; no gold chains bedecked the episcopal neck, nor did costly lace fall over the white wrists of jewel-bedizened episcopal fingers. The only ornaments of the original episcopacy were a meek and lowly spirit and ability to work. That was the day of women's usefulness. Those good and public-spirited women of the early Church formed the ladder by means of which was taken that first step which is the only one that counts. It was upon that living ladder that the present system of ecclesiasticism gradually and stealthily, during many hundreds of years, climbed into vast wealth and enormous power. It was the female apostles, only, who could, and did, gain access

to the rich women of Pagan Greece and Rome, in order to persuade them, when converted, to turn their wealth into the yawning coffers of the needy, new Church ; it was the female apostles who ingratiated themselves with queens, and, through plastic queens, beguiled kings to embrace Christianity.*

Thus did Christian bishoprics, in the course of several centuries, gradually become desirable positions for ambitious men ; and then did ambitious men begin diligently to preach to women of the beauty of feminine self-effacement and avoidance of notoriety, of the loveliness of feminine self-sacrifice, of the peculiarly admirable quality of feminine modest retirement, of the virtue of obedient, "womanly" silence, of the sweetness of meek subjection of women to men, and, above all, of the unseemliness of women's teaching when those instructed were men !

We have since witnessed exactly the same process in the foundation and growth of Methodism, and the world may see it repeated again in the aggrandizement of the Salvation Army, Theosophy, and Mrs. Eddy's "Christian Science," and the dispossession

* See Origen's admission that employees in households seduced the women and children to the Christian faith ("Reply to Celsus," book III.), and Wm. Cave's account ("Lives of the Fathers") of the apostolic labors of the woman slave who, through such method, won the Georgian kingdom to state acceptance of Christianity.

of the women who are now co-laborers with men in these infant systems.

The transformation in Christianity began in this wise. In the third century Tertullian, a native of North Africa, and a Pagan by birth and education, became a fiercely zealous proselyte to Christianity. Tertullian was at that time a middle-aged man, who, having run the gamut of the vices common to sensual men in great cities, had become an incipient woman-hater, and, having exhausted life in one extreme, was easily plunged into its opposite, contempt for the rational joys of life and great expectations of rewards to be gained after death through such contempt. Coming under the sway of such ambition, Tertullian turned his attention to an entire reconstruction of the simple ways of Christianity, with its wedded apostles and equality of rights, duties and privileges. He taught that marriage is, at best, but a "necessary evil," that a legalized marital union is but a degree less in impurity than an illegal one; that celibacy, alone, constitutes a state of purity for either man or woman, and that only the unmarried will be "pure enough to enter Paradise immediately after death," but that it is a great virtue in a woman who has fallen into the error of marrying, to refuse to live in the relation of a wife to a husband, "preferring a mar-

riage ordinance with God!" Having himself fallen into the utterly groundless error of believing that the world would come to an end in the year 1000 A. D., Tertullian taught that it was undesirable to beget children, referring to them as follows: "That most bitter pleasure of children....also this is with us hateful. For why should we long to have children? since if we have them we wish to send them before us on account of the threatening tribulation." And, belonging to the class whose selfish habits generate jealousy, Tertullian not only labored to convince his own wife that second marriages are inexpressibly worse than first marriages, * but struggled to get them prohibited as a vital part of Christian doctrine.

Of course, such teaching did not make easy progress. Celibacy, though violently enforced among the priesthood in the eleventh, was not established as an inviolable law until the thirteenth century of Christianity, and the New Testament prohibitions of second marriages the most devout New Testament worshippers tranquilly continued to ignore. Indeed, the priests of the early Church did not even wait for the death of one wife before taking another, and about 335 A. D. Pope Sylvester found it necessary to decree that every priest should "be the husband of one wife.

* See the published letter to his wife.

only." But this was of little avail (papal infallibility not having, then, become a dogma), and in the sixth century it was found necessary to enact in the canons of one of the councils that "if any one is married to many wives he shall do penance!" The only genuine result, however, of all these efforts has been to furnish evidence of the truth of Fénélon's declaration, "No human power can force the impenetrable intrenchments of liberty in the human heart. Force can never persuade men; it can only make hypocrites." As every student of life knows, polygamy, in Christendom, under the blows of force continues to this day, flourishing like a green bay tree, legal suppression having the only effect of driving it into its worst form, secrecy and illegitimate offspring. As for marriage among the priesthood, the followers of the anarchic Luther coolly throw off the yoke of the Church on this question, declaring the former "legality" illegal, and openly setting up a fresh legality of their own; while the priests of the old regime, forbidden to mate themselves legally, mate illegally when their inclinations toward matrimony are stronger than their inclinations toward law.

Various causes keep alive a large body of undoubtedly genuine celibates, male and female, recruited from the ranks of those whose abnormality,

or thwarted tastes and blighted fortunes, disincline them to matrimony and domesticity. Tertullian, undoubtedly, gave great impetus to such abnormality by popularizing the dogma that sexual appetite and depravity are identical, and by insistence that woman was the guilty first human cause of such depravity! He it was, also, who imported into Christianity the Pagan ideas of a despotic hierarchy, ideas totally opposed to the Christianity of Jesus, of Priscilla, of Paul, Phœbe, Apollos, or Mary, and their co-workers. At the same time, the contempt for woman as a sex (a contempt which often exists among men side by side with passion for one woman or even with worship of ideal woman as a goddess), led Tertullian to strive to eliminate from the new hierarchy that important part which priestesses had played, for uncounted thousands of years, in the temple service of the human race. The strongest proof we could desire of the still prevalent ministerial equality of Christian men and women down to Tertullian's advent in the third century is found in his own bitter tirades against such equality in his book, "Prescription Against Heretics." Down to that time, whatever may be said of its profundity of thought, Christianity had, at least, possessed the merit of being a system of *free* thought. In order to be a Christian of "sound

doctrine," it was only necessary to live a life of purity and simplicity, recognizing the brotherly and sisterly claim for help and sympathy among all those who accepted Jesus as a beloved brother, guide, and teacher. The Christians held but one central idea in common, namely, that of a perfectly free and voluntary association of equals, who, having rejected both Jewish and Pagan priesthoods, had resolved to hold fast to the mental freedom wherewith the simple teaching of Jesus had made them free. The variety of minor opinions was endless. For instance, during the first four hundred years, one could believe what one chose in regard to Jewish rites, the worth or worthlessness of the Jewish Scriptures, the birth and parentage of Jesus, and yet be counted as Christian, if holding to the spirit of Jesus' teaching. The majority of Christians worked in scores of perfectly independent cliques, each one of which was fully as "authoritative" as another. There was no canon of Christian books, or writings, no "Old" or "New Testament," that one was compelled (under penalty of being branded as "infidel" or "unevangelical") to accept as authentic, and there was no pompous "papa" in a high seat whom all were expected to honor by virtue of his high chair. As one of the former Christians reminded his fellows, referring to

their orignal estate, " Ye were all lowly in mind and free from arrogance, yielding rather than claiming submission," and " the only test of a true scripture is whether or not it coincides with the teachings of Jesus."*

Tertullian well called those primitive Christians " heretics," that is, " choosers of doctrines," for each was perfectly free to take, or choose, such religious opinions as he or she deemed most reasonable. Jesus, their leader, was the arch-heretic, and had chosen to reject all the dogmas of his pharisaical forefathers. Peter was a heretic, from Paul's point of view, and Paul a heretic of heretics according to Peter's way of thinking. I repeat that there was, for the several earliest centuries, every possible variety of belief concerning the authority or non-authority of the Jewish scriptures, (Origen, Athanasius, Gregory, Nyssen and Basil dealing with the creation stories in Genesis as myth), concerning all writings put forth in the names of prominent apostles, and concerning the nature and mission of Jesus, as we know from the controversial writings which have survived the fray.

* Clement, of Rome, the date of whose life and writings is unknown, as we have no positive information of him earlier than the fourth century, and that admittedly hearsay, reported by Eusebius.

Marcion, one of the ablest reasoners of the second century, claimed that all of the letters then circulating over the name of Paul, had been tampered with by persons who had interpolated passages for which they wished to procure Pauline authority. Marcion rejected, entirely, the "Epistles to Titus," the two "Epistles to Timothy," and the "Epistle to the Hebrews." Since the fourth century it has been claimed that Clement of Rome was the real author of the latter epistle. Paul had claimed that he and his associates were the only true followers of Jesus. He rejected the Hebrew Scriptures, and declared that the God therein depicted was evil, angry, jealous, repentant, changeable, and favored those who were incestuous, adulterous, murderous. Peter excused the Hebrews by claiming that all passages which conveyed such impressions were corruptions due to imperfect copying and re-editing. (So declares the author of the Clementine Homilies, XVIII., 22.) Marcion, Paul's adherent, agreed with Cerdo in rejecting not only the four epistles mentioned, but all those now accounted canonical, accepting only ten of Paul's epistles (and only part of those) as genuine, and using a gospel, now lost, which he asserted was the only one used by Paul as evangelical. The gospel which now bears the name of Luke is supposed to be

derived from that Paul-Marcion gospel. But, as both the Petrine and Pauline factions accused each other of mutilating and corrupting the Gospels, there can be no certainty, whatever, in regard to any one of them. Gregory Nazianzen, Cyril of Jerusalem, and the Church Council of Laodicea, agreed in rejecting the so-called "Revelation of St. John the Divine," and it will, therefore, be seen that Martin Luther had goodly precedent in declaring, "Let each man judge of this book according to the light that is in him, and by his own particular perceptions.....I look upon the Revelation of St. John as neither apostolic nor prophetic." Eusebius, church historian of the fourth century, tells us that the Gospel of St. John was also held to be spurious, neither apostolic nor prophetic.

Against that freedom of thought, liberty of criticism, and equality of ministerial service, Tertullian determinedly threw his great power of passionate and plausible denunciation. He was one of those voluble and insistent orators who easily establish sway over men in ages when many are like sheep, and was, also, a most prolific writer; consequently his efforts to build up an exalted hierarchy with a settled, authoritative body of dogmas, soon drew to his standard all like-minded aspirants. In chapter 41 of his "Pre-

scription Against Heretics," he wrote: "The very women of the heretics, how bold! who teach, argue, perform exorcisms, promise cures, baptize. Their ordinations are inconsiderate, trivial, changeable.... Thus to-day one is a bishop, to-morrow another: to-day he is a deacon who to-morrow is a reader, to-day a presbyter who to-morrow is a layman. *For even on laymen do they impose priestly functions.*" *

Here we have an immensely valuable testimonial of the unity of function and the equality among the male and female ministers of the early Church. Laymen and laywomen, naturally enough, performed the duties which Paganism had restricted to carefully narrowed priestesses and priests, for the reason that Christianity itself was a *protest against priests.*

As no salaries were attached to the duties of the ministry; as there were no temples, nor tithes, nor altar perquisites; as Christianity was regarded (when it came into notice), both by aristocratic Jew and Gentile, as an "odious superstition" opposed to both of those claimants for the possession of the "only true religion," the ministerial offices were, not prizes to be contended for, but burdens to be borne:

* Justin Martyr tell us that the laity, also, administered the rites of the eucharist and he, too, records that they preached, baptized, taught theology, etc.

one was a bishop, or overseer, to-day, to-morrow another; to-day a deacon and to-morrow a reader, or performer of the simple rites of exorcism, baptism, common supper, and so on, merely in loving obedience to the request, "Bear ye one another's burdens."

Tertullian, however, violently opposed such equality, declaring that "the discipline of reverence and modesty is incumbent upon laymen — since these things [baptism and so on] pertain to superiors—forbidding them to assume to themselves the function assigned [by the innovators] to the overseer. Emulation of the episcopal office is the mother of schism." ("Treatise on Baptism," chap. 17.) But, there had been no "emulation of the episcopal office," so long as the overseers had been modestly content to take their unsalaried turn in overseeing. The general discipline of reverence and modesty began to be in danger only when some of the temporary overseers, or bishops, tried to climb into permanent official superiority over their fellows. To exalt the office of bishop was to ensure an easy letter of credit to any sort of an individual who could gain access to it, providing a position which could be counted upon to cover a multitude of sins or of mental or spiritual shortcomings. Mutual criticism is necessary for the mutual improvement of men and women; but, mutual criticism is

only compatible with pure democracy. By the time Christendom was partly coerced and partly persuaded into abject reverence for the bishop's office, the occupant was placed beyond the reach of that healthy freedom of speech which helps mankind to improvement of customs, and manners, or morals. We all know of the immorality resulting, alike in Paganism, Judaism and Christianity, from the inculcation of unquestioning reverence at the time when such reverence was most widespread and deeply ingrained in the adherents of each of these systems.

A strong coadjutor of Tertullian's was his contemporary and fellow-countryman, Cyprian. Cyprian had Tertullian's works read to him daily, and, in asking for them was accustomed to say, "Give me my Master," thus early revealing how quickly Tertullianism led men back into the very errors of subserviency deprecated by Jesus. The effect of Tertullian's Pagan ideas of priestliness was speedily seen, also, in Cyprian's determined and successful attempt to elevate the office of bishop into a position of established pre-eminence. As the Rev. George A. Jackson says, Cyprian was *the* bishop: "There were bishops before him, there were bishops after him; but never has one so magnified the office as this Bishop of Carthage." From the day of Tertullian and Cyprian onward

(about 250 A.D.) fierce wrangles over, not the reasonableness, but, the authority of dogmas and over supremacy in the Churches, were unremitting and violent even to the extent of murderous attacks upon each other by bishops assembled in formal ecclesiastical council. Tertullian's followers, arrogantly claiming that their's were the right, or the true, opinions, took upon themselves the name of "orthodox," and, insolently assuming that it was morally obligatory upon all other Christians to think as they did, they labored zealously to render the title of "heretic" (i.e., chooser of opinions) an odious and offensive one.

As the spirit of Tertullianism spread, that little matter kindled a great fire, and the title of "heretic" became not only an offensive epithet, but a seriously dangerous charge for a man or woman to bring upon his or her head. At first, it had been merely a piece of retort and counter-retort, for, every Christian who conceived an individual opinion was, of course, a heretic. Tertullian himself is called a heretic by Jerome, who, also, publicly denounced Eusebius as "ringleader of the heretics"; both Tertullian and Jerome agreed in shouting "heretic" at Origen, and, in time, Jerome, in his turn, was published as a heretic. Athanasius was a heretic in the opinion of Arius, and Arius a heretic to Athanasius. The ab-

surdity of the attempt to condemn men for the opinions they hold is amusingly shown in the fact, that the most zealous heresy-hunter of the fifth century, the infamous Cyril of Alexandria, is openly arraigned for his own heresy by the "blessed" Bishop Theodoret, of Cyrus! But, the blood-thirsty spirit engendered by the claims of the arrogant party, gradually intimidated those who were possessed of more tolerance, and drove them to concealment of their true thoughts. By the close of the fourth century, Cyril of Jerusalem wrote, "Formerly, indeed, there were open heretics, but now the Church is filled with concealed heretics." The need of concealment, however, was strikingly exhibited at the ecclesiastical Council of Ephesus, where the "orthodox" delegates yelled, "Take away and burn Eusebius; let him be burned alive; let him be cut in two; as he has divided, let him be divided." All this merely because Eusebius had expressed an opinion in regard to a purely metaphysical question, a question which, from its very nature, is not subject to proof.

Singularly enough, we are now witnessing a resurrection of that odious spirit of arrogance in the attempts of the Cyril-tempered Max Nordau to launch a new opprobrious epithet against all strong thinkers who have thoughts beyond Max Nordau's little, men-

tal tape-measure. This modern Boanerges is seeking to create a movement of popular hatred against originality, by stamping all Great Originals as "Degenerates"! But, surely, the human race cannot forever stumble along in the stupid conceit that there is one definitely fixed type of mind and body for mankind, outside of which none can safely stray. The man or woman who, to-day, strives to check freedom of thought, is the only enemy of society which the world need fear. As experience has demonstrated, monstrous deeds are the progeny of checked and repressed thoughts, and the eras of horrible crimes, of human torturing, of cruelty to animals as well as to mankind, are the eras in which society does not dare to say what society is really thinking.

The writings of fourth century Christians abundantly portray the boundless evils into which the people were plunged by the ambitious efforts of a few to establish a new hierarchy and a settled system of dogma. Use of the powers of reason, which constitutes mankind's only superiority over the beasts of the field, was, not only forbidden, but scorned and even fiercely denounced as sinful! Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. 43, Sec. 82) confesses, "Authority is obtained by malice and wickedness; and the chairs be-

long, not to the most worthy, but to the most powerful." Basil (de Spiritu Sancto, c. 30) writes, "What sea storm is more fierce than this tempest of the churches; in which every boundary of the fathers has been moved, every foundation and fortification of doctrines has been unsettled, and all things agitated and overthrown, having been raised upon a rotten foundation? Falling upon each other, we are overthrown by each other; and if your enemy does not first strike you, your friend wounds you; and if he should fall, being stricken, your fellow soldier rises against you. We are in fellowship so far as to hate our adversaries in common; but when our enemies have disappeared, we immediately regard each other as enemies....The doctrines of piety have been overthrown; the laws of the churches have been confounded; the ambition of those who fear not the Lord has leaped into the highest stations; and the first seat henceforth is openly proposed as the reward of impiety, so that he who has most shockingly blasphemed is preferred as the people's bishop. Priestly gravity has departed; those who should feed the flock of the Lord with knowledge are wanting; the ambitious always consuming the money of the poor on their enjoyment, or in the distribution of gifts. The accuracy of the rules is obscured; there

is great liberty of sinning; for those who have obtained power through human favor, make a return for the grace of their favor in granting to those who sin all things that are pleasurable to them."

As not only the confession of Basil, but the entire history of the third, fourth and fifth centuries shows, the triumph of Tertullian's "orthodoxy" and hierarchy was a pure case of brute might temporarily overthrowing intellectual (or spiritual) right. During the fourth century thirty-eight Church councils were held, and of these nineteen were "orthodox" and nineteen "heretical," the burning question being over the deification of Jesus, which was opposed by all the rational men and women of Christendom. Gregory of Nazianzen writes of these councils that he "never saw an assembly of bishops that had a good and happy conclusion; that they always increased the distemper rather than cured it; that the obstinate contests, and the ambition of overcoming and domineering which ordinarily reigns among them, is prejudicial; and, ordinarily, those who are concerned to judge others are moved thereto by ill-will rather than by a desire to restrain others." The ecclesiastic historian, Dupin, says of the Council of Ephesus (431 A. D.): "The conclusion of the Council did not at all conduce to the peace of the Church;

but, on the contrary, the minds of men appeared more discontented than ever, and the eastern bishops, who had the worst of it, sought to revenge themselves. In return they wrote to Theodotus, bishop of Ancyra, against the letters of the bishop of the council; at Tarsus they confirmed what they had done, and deposed not only Cyril and Memnon, but also six of the deputies of the Council of Ephesus....Afterwards, having come into the East, they met again at Antioch, confirmed what they had done a second time, and from thence wrote to the Emperor....But, as the party of Cyril was ill-used in the East, so those of the Nestorian party of the Eastern bishops met no better usage in Asia, Cappadocia and Thracia. Maximian, chosen bishop of Constantinople, who began already to exercise his jurisdiction over the churches of those dioceses, would have himself acknowledged by all the bishops, and deprived those who would not communicate with him. Ferinus, bishop of Cæsarea, came to Tyana, and ordained as bishop in the place of Eutherius; but he, getting some help, forced him whom Ferinus had ordained to renounce his ordination. They also attempted to depose Dorotheus, metropolitan of Martianople, and ordain Saturninus in his place. They also strove to deprive Hallodus, bishop of Tarsus.

Finally, all places were full of deposed and exiled bishops, and the Church was in terrible trouble and confusion."

Discorus obtained political authority to fill one council with men engaged to do his bidding, a rabble "armed with swords, sticks and chains," and by use of violence compelled the bishops to sign a paper deposing Flavian, bishop of Constantinople. "Flavian was banished, but died a few days after, of the kick and other ill-treatment which he had received, chiefly from Barsymas and his monks." (Fleuri's Ecclesiastical History, Book 27.)

Women still continued in the ministry through the fourth and the succeeding century, as we know from the references to them made by Basil, Chrysostom, Gregory of Nyrsa, Theodoret and Sozomen, and, indeed, they have always and everywhere, since Jesus began his teaching, continued working in the ministry, the only difference being that whereas they had originally worked in honorable equality with men, after that evil triumph of which just men should be ashamed, they toiled in obscure positions under the domination.

* When Fliedner revived the ordination of women for the ministry, in 1835, he very carefully required that, though all men were so rewarded, women should "not look forward for pecuniary emoluments or honors of the world," in other words, that they should act as unpaid and obscure drudges!

of men. * But two streams of influence were now steadily operating against their continuance in the public ministry of the Church; first, the bitter misogyny of Tertullian's works, which were rousing fierce sex hatred on the part of men, and, second, the brutal violence of the warring male bishops, which led the non-fighting female bishops to shun their assemblies, even when they were held within the churches, as those who were not restrained by the remembrance of the brotherly love inculcated by Jesus, were neither restrained by the presence of women, when these opposed their vain pretensions. It was an age of pure unreason among Christian men, and women were compelled to retire and wait for the development of men's faculty of deciding questions by the mind, rather than by the fist. In the fierce contests between the Unitarians * and the upstart Trinitarians of the fourth century, both sides committed every possible outrage, if we may believe the charges written by Arian, on one side, and by Athanasius on the other. Men were slaughtered in the very churches, altars violently overturned in wild scuffles between the bishops, many churches being burned to the ground by the ousted claimants who destroyed because their faction could not control, and women

* The original Christians.

were stripped naked and beaten in the very presence of the bishops,—" bishops walking about in the very houses where these things were perpetrated, to please whom wretched virgins were compelled to meet drawn swords, all kinds of dangers, and every insult and injury." (Manse's Councils, II., p. 1164, Au. 336.) It was just after the opening of the fifth century that Cyril of Alexandria instigated the ever-infamous murder of the lovely, good and brilliant Hypatia, then the leading teacher of mathematics and philosophy in Alexandria. Cyril began his career as bishop by violently seizing the churches and church property of the Novatians, (as a party of his Christian brethren were called, after their leader,) simply because he did not approve of their opinions in regard to second marriages, and the treatment of the back-sliding church members, whom the Novatians wished to drop from their fellowship. Cyril's brutal motto was, " If the meek inherit the earth, the violent should have possession of the sees," and he acted accordingly. His second performance at Alexandria was to lead his mob of infuriated monks against the Jews, for some real or fancied offense done to Christians, sacking and plundering the whole Jewish quarter, assaulting the synagogues, and driving thousands of Jews out of the city. " A quarrel with Orestes,

the governor, ensued, in the course of which the latter was set upon in the streets by a multitude of monks, and only escaped by the opportune intervention of some of the people." Cyril's attack upon Hypatia grew out of this affair, as she was known to be a friend of Orestes, and this was sufficient to turn the mob of monks from whom Orestes had escaped upon the defenseless woman, who chanced to be driving from her school. "Observing her, as she returned home in her carriage," says Socrates of Constantinople, "they dragged her from it and carried her to the church called Cæsareum, where they completely stripped her, and then murdered her with shells. After tearing her body in pieces, they took her mangled limbs to a place called Cinaron, and there burned them." And yet that Cyril was canonized as a "saint" by the body of Christians which claims to peculiarly and specially represent the spirit of human brotherhood! Never was the evil engendered by the fundamental doctrines of Christendom's false theology more shockingly portrayed than in that deed of Cyril's. That the evil is not dead, but sleepeth, biding new opportunity of exercise, is indicated in a letter against women's university education recently published by Cardinal Gibbons, of Baltimore, in which we find the threat that if the modern woman

does not cease airing her opinions, men may once more return to drowning female infants !

As will be seen, the doctrines above referred to actually beget and keep alive the hatred of male for female based on pure unreason. The Trinitarians took, as the basis of their dogmatic structure, the absolutely silly theory (borrowed in germ, from obscure Asiatic myths by the Jews, and widely republished by the ignorant Tertullian) that the female sex is the primal cause of all human evil, and that mankind is threatened with an eternity of horrible pain on account of a mythical deed attributed to the mythical "first woman" of the human race. It is, of course, as all the reasoning world at last knows, a theory born in the empty skulls of ignorant, cowardly and selfish sensualists, who found it easier to condemn all womankind, than to control the passions which inclined them to place themselves in the power of some artful and designing woman. It is a theory worthy of the brainless moth which dashes itself, again and again, into the flame that, bit by bit, burns it to death. Something better might be expected of men.

Tertullian declared that every woman on earth ought to go about in humble garb, even affecting "meanness of appearance, walking about as Eve, mourning and repentant, in order by every garb of

penitence she might the more fully expiate that which she derives from Eve—the ignominy, I mean, of the first sin, and the odium attaching to her as the cause of human perdition." In his published sermons he declared, "the sentence of God on this sex of yours, woman, lives in this age: the guilt must of necessity live also," thus denying that Christianity had had any power to relieve women of the odium which Judaism had (in its latter days) brought upon them. It must be remembered that that was an age in which not only the illiterate masses, but many of the better educated, implicitly believed in the possibility of "revelations," direct from the Creator of the universe, coming to human beings, who, thus "inspired," spoke with divine authority: for we can comprehend Tertullian's influence only by means of recollection of that fact, and with knowledge that he claimed to have received such special revelations. In enforcing the wearing of veils, to conceal every portion of their "pernicious faces," Tertullian declared to women that the veil was their yoke of subjection, and that, "To us [men] the Lord has even by revelations measured the space for the veil to extend over!" * Probably nothing could be cited that would more forcibly illustrate the exterme absurdity of

* "On the Veiling of Virgins."

those male dogmatists, who plunged Christendom into that mental imbecility of a thousand years which the world now agrees to call "the dark ages," than does this assertion that the Ruler of a million worlds was engaged in the business of measuring women's veils!

During the century succeeding Tertullian's time, Chrysostom, the most popular preacher and bishop of his age, is found vigorously airing the same theme, declaring that woman is rightly subjected to man as a result of "Eve's" action in that garden which Christendom at last knows to be as fabulous as that of Hesperides, and which, very probably, is only a garbled rendition of the myths of Pandora, the garden of the Hesperides, and the Babylonian "tree of life," patched together by some Jewish scribe shortly before our era, at which time all the leading mythologies of the world were first brought together for the famous royal library of Alexandria. That first use of the "Eve" myth simply demonstrates the truth of the well known saying, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing." The antique world tried to save itself from danger by keeping the people from gaining that little. The modern world, learning by the failures of antiquity, is trying to stave off such danger by giving the masses a great deal of knowledge,

ardently desiring that their minds would open faster to the scientific truths which have great power to rescue mankind from the dominion of absurdity. This question of the enlightenment of the masses, constitutes the great battle-ground of the philosopher and the priest, as the occupation of the latter will be gone as soon as the laity generally discover the purely artificial character of priestly elevation above laymen.

In England, elevation of the priesthood with corresponding depreciation of the laity, went hand in hand with the dogmas of the superiority of man and inferiority of woman. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle lets us into the secret by which the former was set in motion. In the year 694, says the chronicler, "Wilitred succeeded to the kingdom of the Kentish-men and held it 33 years....As soon as he was king, he commanded a great council to be assembled at the place which is called Baccancelde, in which sat Wilitred king of the Kentish-men, and Brihtwald, the archbishop of Canterbury, and Tobias, bishop of Rochester, and with them were assembled abbots and abbesses and many wise ones, all to consult about the bettering of God's churches in Kent. Now began the king to speak, and said, 'It is my will that all the

ministers and the churches that were given and bequeathed to the glory of God in the days of faithful kings my predecessors (and in the days of my kinsmen, of King Ethelbert and those who followed after him) do so remain to the glory of God, and finally continue so to all eternity for evermore. For I, Wilitred, an earthly king, instigated by the King of heaven, and burning with the zeal of righteousness, have learned from the institutes of our forefathers that no layman has a right to possess himself of a church, nor of any of the things which belong to a church. And hence strictly and faithfully do we appoint and decree and in the name of the Almighty God and of all his saints we forbid to all kings our successors, and ealdormen, and all laymen, any lordship whatever over the churches and over all their possessions.' ....It is the duty of the king to appoint earls and ealdormen, shire-reeves and doomsmen, but the duty of the archbishops to instruct and advise the community of God, and bishops and abbots and abbesses, priests and deacons, and to choose and appoint and consecrate and stablish them by good precepts and example lest any of God's flock stray and be lost." (It is noteworthy, just here, that up to that time, near the end of the seventh century, Anglo-Saxon women sat as members of the

royal and ecclesiastical assembly.) In spite of the king's decree, "instigated by the heavenly King," the laity in liberty-loving England were not easily dispossessed of their original rights. A hundred years later, in 786, we find a fresh proclamation, this time from the Archbishop of Canterbury, that "in the name of God, and by his awful doom, I command, as I have command of Pope Leo, that henceforth none dare to choose for themselves lords over God's heritage from amongst laymen," showing that laymen were still resisting the encroachments of the priests. Nor did the dogmas of the Church have sufficient power, among this tenacious people, to dispossess womankind of that primeval right of "rule and right lordship" on the throne, which the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle tells us was exercised by the vigorous and powerful Queen Æthelfloed in the tenth century, and a shadow of which is still held by the nineteenth century Victoria. When monarchical "lordship" dies its destined and natural death in England, it will bury the rule of man and woman in one common grave, escaping the error of France, Russia and America, which got rid of one form of monarchy only to establish another, more odious, unnatural and unreasonable.

Persistently leavening public opinion, in a grossly

superstitious age, with the theological doctrine of popular preachers, that woman is a sex of superior wickedness and inferior mentality, could have but one general result throughout Christendom. Not only did it gradually create within women themselves a passion of self-depreciation, humility and a self-hatred which led thousands of them to slowly and persistently torture themselves until relieved by insanity or death, it planted within the minds of men a jealous hatred and superstitious horror of the natural powers of women, which ultimately culminated in a veritable crusade of ecclesiastics against womankind. That such should be the case, was as simply inevitable as is the misery of one girl and the contemptuous tyranny of one boy in a family whose heads openly and constantly teach a brother that he is superior, by virtue of sex, and has a right to lord it over his sister. As Emerson says of similar teaching, it is the same in the case of millions as it is in the case of two, and the sooner we learn this truth, the more careful will society be to frown down an ecclesiastical or political dogma which we now would abhor as between one brother and one sister.

Ecclesiastical law in Christendom, growing out of the Eve dogma, gradually converted marriage into a system of legalized slavery for all women, mitigated

only by the chance that the wife might, by personal charm, win good treatment from the master to whom she was obliged to swear obedience, and by the chance that the master would not abuse the power his laws granted to him. This degradation of the wife, naturally enough, suggested the exclusion of women from that political rule which they had always shared with men since political rule had been instituted among mankind; and the Salic law in France, the elimination of women from the succession to the throne in Russia, and the exclusion of women from participation in political affairs in the so-called democracies of the United States and modern France, are all fruits of the Pandora-Eve dogma. (It must be remembered that government in Pagan Greece and Rome, to the last, was chiefly theocratic, and that women, even after they ceased to mingle in men's common councils, yet enjoyed great political dignity as a sex, by virtue of their office as deliverers of "inspired" oracles, every political event of note being referred to their decision.) Finally, the lowest depth of woman's degradation in Christendom was reached in the public sentiment (guided by ecclesiastics) which condemned thousands of poor creatures to be tortured and publicly burnt alive at the stake for their imaginary league with Christendom's imaginary

devil! Roman Catholics and Protestants, Europeans and Americans, alike, were changed from naturally good and kind men into practical likeness to that mythical chief of tortures, the "devil," upon whom their fevered imaginations constantly dwelt, and defenseless women, whom Nature designed to be men's greatest joy and necessary complement, were the victims of that monstrously false conception of pure ignorance. Now, there is no doubt that those woman-torturers were men *naturally* as good, as sincere, as anxious to do right as, undoubtedly, are our Bishop Doanes, Cardinal Gibbons, Rev. Peter J. Eastons, and other woman-subjectors to-day. There is no doubt that they were sane on every point save in regard to that cruel *idée fixe*—that God had qualified them to govern women on account of "Eve's sin." What a comment does the history of the men perverted by that error provide on the awful danger of trying to force society to abjure reason and follow blind credulity! Elevating "belief" into the chief duty of all virtues, and constantly publishing "doubt" as the chief of all sins, they, inevitably, came to treat belief as the only virtue and doubt as the only sin; and the very professional leaders and exemplars of morality, led astray by their false conception of virtue, plunged into every genuine sin and

crime and cruelty conceivable to monstrously distorted minds! As early as the fifth century, the absolute powerlessness of belief in Christian dogmas to promote true morality had manifested itself, and an honest Christian wrote, "The very church which should be the body to appease the anger of God, alas! what reigns there but disorders calculated to incense the Most High! It is more common to meet with Christians who are guilty of the greatest abominations, than with those who are wholly exempt from crime....Their prayers are criminal meditations rather than vows of expiation. Scarcely is the service ended before each returns to his old practices. Some go to their wine, others to their impurities, still others to robbery and brigandage, so that we cannot doubt that these things had been occupying them while they were in church. Nor is it the lowest of people who are thus guilty. There is no rank whatever in the Church which does not commit all sorts of crime." *

Nor can our Protestants flatter themselves that any better results flowed from their transfer of belief from a Church to a Book. The punishments of Protestant Christendom, though declining in cruelty as reason gains increasing power over belief, have never

* Salvian, of Marseilles, 440 A.D.

during three centuries ceased to be inexpressibly more criminal than the crimes they were meant to correct. It is doubtful if untaught savages ever dealt with that natural enemy—a stranger from a rival tribe—as the Christian officials of Scotland dealt with poor Allison Balfour, accused of "league with the devil," in the year 1593, an account of which is preserved in the official report of the Scottish court. "Towards the end of 1593," says Froude, "there was trouble in the family of the Earl of Orkney. His brother laid a plot to murder him, and was said to have sought the help of a 'notoricus witch' called Allison Balfour. When Allison Balfour's life was looked into, no evidence could be found connecting her either with the particular offense or with witchcraft in general; but it was enough in these matters to be accused. She swore she was innocent; but her guilt was only held to be aggravated by her perjury. She was tortured again and again. Her legs were put into the caschilaws—an iron frame which was gradually heated until it burned into the flesh—but no confession could be wrung from her. The caschilaws failed utterly, and something else had to be tried. She had a husband, a son and a daughter, a child seven years old. As her own sufferings did not work upon her, she might be touched, perhaps, by the suf-

ferings of those who were dear to her. They were brought into court and placed at her side; and the husband was first placed in the 'long irons'—some accursed instrument, I know not what. Still the devil did not yield. She bore this; and her son was next operated on. The boy's legs were set in 'the boot'—the iron boot you may have heard of. The wedges were driven in, which, when forced home, crushed the very bone and marrow. Fifty-seven mallet stroves were delivered upon the wedges. There was no confession yet. So, last of all, the little daughter was taken. There was a machine called the 'piniwinkies,'—a kind of thumbscrew, which brought blood from under the finger-nails, with a pain successfully terrible. These things were applied to the poor child's hands, and the mother's constancy broke down, and she said she would admit anything they wished. She confessed her witchcraft—so tried, she would have confessed to the seven deadly sins—and then she was burned, recalling her confession, and with her last breath protesting her innocence." Such was the government of men over women, when women were, by the aid of superstition, reduced to subjection most complete. And, though the form of torture is changed, and the material instruments of torture are no longer used in open court, men's torture

of women in attempts to govern them have not yet ceased, but simply grow more refined as men grow less militant. The honest but ignorant woman who is seized by male police, dragged before a court of men, and condemned to six months imprisonment in close association with vilest criminals solely on account of some legal flaw in the marriage ceremony devised by men,* is as outrageously misgoverned, though in different wise, as was poor Allison Balfour. The fifteen-year-old-girl, caught in a trap, driven to madness by the injustice of the laws which doom her to life-long disgrace for a natural act which harms no one, and killing her entrapper, is outrageously misgoverned by men who doom her to death for infringement of the natural laws which prompt a cruelly trapped creature to attack its ensnarer.† But, terrible as was the involuntary torture of women under the influence of the possessed-of-the-devil idea, the voluntary torture which the poor wretches, weighted down with the sinfulness of their sex, inflicted upon themselves, was no less terrible. The hair-cloth garments worn next the delicate skin, which so irritated the system that outraged Nature protested in violent fevers and nervous convulsions,

* See case of Ellen O'Rourke, now in Sherburne prison, Massachusetts.
† See case of Maria Barberi, of New York.

and the scourges whose power of injury was increased by thickly set iron points, were but successive steps toward the life-long burial in dungeons which furnished every element of horror that a diseased imagination could devise. Victor Hugo tells us of one of these coffins for the living which he saw in this century, about twenty miles from Brussels—in the heart of Christian civilization !—at the Abbey of Villars. "In the middle of the meadow which was once the court-yard of the cloister, and on the banks of the Dyle, are four stone cells of the secret dungeons, half underground and half under water. These were *in pace.* Each of these dungeons has a remnant of an iron wicket, a closet, and a barred skylight, which, on the outside, is two feet above the surface of the river, and from the inside is six feet above the ground. Four feet in depth of the river flows along the outer face of the wall ; the ground of the cell near by is constantly wet. This saturated soil was the only bed of the *in pace* occupant. In one of these dungeons there remains the stump of an iron collar fixed in the wall ; in another may be seen a kind of a square box, formed of four slabs of granite, too short for a human being to lie down in, too low to stand erect. Now, in this was placed a being like ourselves, and then a lid of stone was closed above her head. There it

is. You can see it ; you can touch it. These ' places of peace ' ; these dungeons ; these iron hinges ; these metal collars ; this lofty skylight on a level with which the river runs ; this box of stone, covered by its lid of granite, like a sepulchre, with this difference, that it shut in the living and not the dead ; this soil of mud, this cess-pool ; these oozing walls. Oh ! what declaimers ! "

And well may we echo, Oh ! what declaimers of the evil power of ignorance were both the Protestant forcible torture of the poor women believed to be possessed of the devil, and the Roman Catholic voluntary self-torture of the poor women themselves ! But what, save an age of insanity, could have been expected when Reason abdicated her throne and drunken Credulity drove Christendom amuck into the realm of Chaos ?

The only method of restoring the natural equality of dignity between men and women, lies in the demolishment of that elaborate theological structure which maintains that woman is made for the possession of man in a sense in which man is not made for woman, and that celibacy, *per se,* is a state of superior purity. Nature and common sense (not metaphysical sense) demonstrate that there is no good reason why any man or any woman should take, claim, or wield

"lordship" over another. With the coming of a good strong breeze of common sense—such sense as every little girl displays when she asks why the girl should be locked up and the boy allowed to run free in order to protect the girl from the boy—we may reasonably expect that the cobwebs which ignorance wove in the human brain will be swept away, and that the spiders will become an extinct species. Should such era arrive, new life will manifest itself in that which is eternally good in the simple religion of Jesus—the carpenter who loved many women as all men should love womankind, and whom many women loved as all women should love all mankind. And, in spite of a superficial appearance of stability which still hangs about dogmatism, the era of its overthrow is close at hand. True religion, the tie which binds human hearts in love for each other generated by love for a common good, though of slow growth, is yet more flourishing and widespread than at any previous period in the world's history, but "orthodoxy" is tottering towards its final fall. After the invention of printing, it was only a question of time as to when knowledge should be so widely diffused that "authoritative revelations" would become impossible. Now that every two-penny journal of Christendom has taken the Garden of Eden myth as a standing

object for ridicule, the corner-stone of the ecclesiasticism built thereupon is, indeed, crumbling, and the subjection of woman to man maintains its tenure by a thread whose brittleness no sagacious person can fail to see. Already the more Christ-like denominations of Christianity—the Unitarians, Universalists, Quakers, etc.—have opened their doors for the women's re-entrance into that equality of ministry from which thirteen centuries of brutal ignorance have excluded them; and the time is undoubtedly approaching when Methodists, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics, and other sects, will either follow that example or else drop out of existence, for the life of each of these sects depends upon the support of women, and an enlightened womanhood will no longer uphold any body which despises one half the human race, and believes that the other half is conceived in sin and inherently evil.

A striking instance of history repeating itself is found in the closeness with which the origin, rise, spread and aggrandizement of Methodism imitated the same processes of early Christianity. The Methodist Rev. E. O. Haven says, "Our church should gladfully, joyfully acknowledge that she owes her success in the spread of the Gospel as much to women as to men." Yet, so far is Methodism from acknowl-

edging such equality of obligation to women, that it was recently possible for the highest male representatives of the sect to ignominiously reject the highest female representatives, pronouncing them unfit to sit as equals among men merely on account of their sex! The true founder of Methodism was that most remarkable woman, Susanna Wesley, mother of John and Charles, who impregnated her sons with her own superior force, fearlessness, independence and love of righteousness and justice. Reared under the influence and inspired by the example of such a mother, it is little wonder that John Wesley revolted against the hypocrisy and thorough selfishness which characterized the Church of England of the eighteenth century. It was the suggestion of his mother which led Wesley to take the, then, bold step of encouraging the laity to become preachers, or ministers, without which Methodism would probably have been but an ephemeral flame. Filled with appreciation of women's natural capacities by his love and admiration for his own remarkable mother, it was natural that John Wesley should, at her suggestion, rally women to his assistance, in his simple undertaking to purify the debased state into which the common people had fallen through the corruption of their pretended leaders and governors.

So little recollection, though, was there then of women's original work in Christian teaching, that John Wesley does not seem to have reverted to that example as justification for the similar work, which was stimulated by his mother's initiative but which far out-ran her own custom of reading and expounding the scriptures. Moved by the awful ignorance, misery and brutishness of that vast English flock so shamefully neglected by those who should have led it to knowledge, Englishwomen soon began to preach to the people wherever they could find listeners, exactly as did the laymen who were likewise interested in a reformation of the dumb, driven masses. Of course, the Church of England could but oppose a movement which, in itself, was a rebuke to the false shepherds who preyed upon and deceived, instead of guiding, their flocks, but the full force of the opposition, as in Tertullian's time, fell upon the women. "Priestly supremacy" was scotched, not killed, by the Reformation, had simply assumed another guise in the Church of England, and arrogantly resented the preaching even of the laymen ; much more, then, was that of laywomen considered "abominable."

John Wesley, however, devout churchman as he then was and ever continued to be, was too able and intelligent a man to refuse to avail himself of assist-

ants who could rally thousands to the standard of the reformers. Elizabeth Hurrell traveled through several counties of England, fearless of the rioters instigated by the clergy, preaching with great success and bringing into the denomination many men of sterling worth, who thus became pillars of strength to Methodism. Wesley gave this strong and useful woman great encouragement, keeping up a personal correspondence with her during her ministry. June 13, 1771, he wrote to Miss Bosanquet (afterwards Mrs. Fletcher), in answer to her request for his opinion as to the propriety of her preaching: "My dear Sister; I think the strength of the cause rests there, in your having an extraordinary call: so, I am persuaded, has every one of our lay-preachers; otherwise I could not countenance their preaching at all. It is plain to me that the whole work of God termed Methodism, is an extraordinary disposition of his providence. Therefore, I do not wonder if several things occur there which do not fall under the ordinary rules of discipline." Six years later he wrote to Mrs. Crosby: "I hope you will always have your time much filled up. You will, unless you grow weary of well-doing. For is not the harvest plenteous still? Had we ever a larger field of action?" etc.

An Englishman, commenting on the wonderful

work of women in the ministry of the Church in that period, writes : " I have often heard Miss Mary Barret (now, if I mistake not, Mrs. Taft) preach, both in the pulpit and in the open air to immense crowds of hearers. If one might judge of Miss Barret's ' call ' by the success of her labors, it was very ' extraordinary ' indeed." Mrs. Fletcher's experience in the ministry was similar, the crowds who gathered to hear her being so great that she was compelled to speak to them out of doors.

The old spirit of Tertullianism, however, still had sufficient animation to leaven the fresh batch of physicians who had set up the new crusade of healing, though, during his life-time, Wesley succeeded in holding it in abeyance, insomuch that he was encouraged to write to Sarah Mallet (a very popular woman in the ministry) : " It gives me pleasure to hear that prejudice dies away and our preachers behave in a friendly manner." Had Wesley lived but a little longer, however, he would have had to admit : Prejudice is not dead, but sleepeth. The whole machinery of Methodism was in motion by 1799, women preached continuously until 1799, although Wesley died in 1791 ; but, in 1803, the male preachers assembled themseles together and solemnly announced : " We are of opinion that, in general, women ought

not to preach, because a vast majority of people are opposed to it—(shade of Martin Luther ! what a "because"!)—and because their preaching does not seem at all necessary, there being a sufficiency of preachers, whom God has accredited, to supply all the places in our connection with regular preaching. But, if any woman thinks she has an extraordinary call from God to speak in public (and we are sure it must be an *extraordinary* call that can authorize it) we are of opinion she should, in general, address her *own sex* and those only."*

Yet men acknowledge that it was the efforts of one unassisted woman which planted Methodism in the United States ; and one of Methodism's greatest lights, Bishop Asbury, says that he served his first apprenticeship for the ministry in the regular fortnightly meeting instituted and conducted by that vigorous woman, Barbara Heck. Methodism, however valuable as a spiritual movement, lost its sole value the moment the organizing mania of power-loving man seized upon and attempted to formulate that which from its very nature cannot be formulated, i.e., aspiration towards Good. In vain did Wesley remonstrate against the mania, writing to Clarke,†

* Chronicles of Wesleyan Methodism.

† Wesley's Works, vol. VII., p. 284.

"I think Bishop Stillingfleet (in his Irenicum) has unanswerably proved that neither Christ nor his apostles prescribe any particular form of church government, and that the divine right of episcopacy was never heard of in primitive times." Methodism (male) never rested until it succeeded in getting its budding "superintendents" converted into full-fledged "bishops," and in pushing, not only women, but all laymen into a place inferior to the latest-coming hierarchy.

Unhappily for the Methodist priests, however, the laity of the world was more insubordinate with every century of wide-spread instruction. The Jeshurun of Methodism revolted so successfully (though they had to maintain twenty-five years of hard struggle) that the priests and male laity ultimately came to a compromise, by which the former, though still holding superior authority, did yield to the latter a voice in their own church government. Women might well learn from this the useful lesson that equal rights is a kingdom of heaven which suffereth persistence, and the persistent take it by storm. The male laity, having climbed into the place they wanted—a place of some rights which the priests of Methodism are bound to respect—actually joined forces with the priests when it came to a question of refusing to rec-

ognize the rights of the female laity, and added the last touch to the indignity which Methodism has heaped upon womankind by expelling women from a place of honor among laymen, as the preachers had previously rejected them from among preachers! Verily! if

> "A woman, a dog, and a walnut tree,
> The more they are beaten the better they be"

women will soon grow quite too good for this planet, not to speak of quite too superior to mate themselves with mere men.

As might be anticipated, Methodism, animated by such a spirit, has wandered far from its original power for good, and, though still possessing very many noble men and women, by inheritance, within its fold, its official administration is growing to be more and more characterized by the same mismanagement, trickery, greed for office, wire-pulling and ambition which poisoned early Christianity, the Lutheran movement in Germany, and Protestantism in the Church of England. While the shepherds scheme for desirable church positions and waste their time hunting for tiny blades of "heresy" which may be anathematized out of existence, the intellectual and moral powers of the flock stagnate. It is a significant confession recently made by a Methodist preacher of

the Southern United States: "We have no trouble with heresy, none whatever; our people are all devout believers. The only difficulty is with their morals, and, on certain points, their moral sense seems dead." The average Methodist man of the South is as far from the spirit of Jesus as Jesus was from the Pharisees. He holds tenaciously to the belief that all white people are inherently superior to all black; he not only refuses to concede the possibility of a Negro's capacity to receive education, but persecutes, to the farthest extremity that cowards dare, the persons who are trying to educate the Negro; he excuses murder if there is the slightest pretense that a Negro has injured a white person; he apathetically sees young colored women insulted, injured or outraged without response from his manliness, not to speak of his professed "Christliness"; he holds that the annual degradation of a certain proportion of women in order to gratify the most selfish passions of men is a "necessary institution"; and he persecutes (by such offensive epithets, coarse caricatures, gross innuendoes and fierce public denunciation as he dares venture upon) the independent-souled women who rebel against himself and his "white man's" exceedingly bad government.

But he is very, very scrupulous about one's amusing

one's self on the "Sabbath," or Sunday. He thinks it a grievous sin for youths to entertain themselves with pieces of illustrated pasteboard; dancing he regards as the pure invention of "the evil one" (unmindful of the dances of birds and butterflies), and to the best actor of the finest play in the world, he would solemnly say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." The portions of Scripture upon which he seems to dwell with greatest delight are those which deal in animadversions against Jezebel or Herodias' daughter, or which treat of the inferiority of women and their duty of subjection to men.

Not long ago a Southern Methodist wrote :* "The doctrine that women are perfectly sinless, and that their voice and influence in public affairs are all that is necessary to remedy the ills of the world, will not stand the test of a close examination. Not a few women, moreover—and those, too, of the most commanding intellectual powers—have been more satanic than any man ever thought of being. It was Jezebel who sought to slay Elijah after Ahab had spared him; and it was Herodias who paid the price of her own daughter's debasement and disgrace for the head of John the Baptist, after Herod had resolved to keep him safe from her clutches." Now, as Jezebel and

* "Nashville Christian Advocate," 1894.

Herodias are two characters of ill-repute whom sundry American men, North, as well as South, are fond of throwing in our faces (as if modern American women ought to be held responsible for ancient Asiatic!), it may be worth while to go on a little voyage of examination, in order to discover how much foundation the male revilers of Jezebel and Herodias have for their scandal-mongering.

As a preliminary, it may be stated that there are several weak spots in the paragraph above quoted, which indicate a need, somewhere, of cultivation in the useful habit of making accurate statements. In the first place, the "doctrine that women are perfectly sinless," etc., is a doctrine that has no existence outside of the writer's imagination. Wherever female citizens ask to have civil privileges equal to those accorded to male citizens, it is not at all on the absurd assumption that women as a sex are superior to men as a sex, but simply on the ground that in order to have a consistent government of the people, it is essential to count the voices of both halves of the people. And as to the special instances of feminine depravity given in proof that "not a few women have been more satanic than any man ever thought of being," the writer fails to make out his case.

The accuser forgets that there are, always, two

sides to a story, that we have never heard Jezebel's version of the incidents which are recited against her, and that all we know about her is told us by a rival religionist, who hated her as the pope of Rome hated Martin Luther, or as an American A.P.A. now hates a Roman Catholic. Nevertheless, even the Jewish historian, evidently biased against Jezebel by his theological prejudices as he is, does not give any facts whatever which warrant the assertion that Jezebel was any more satanic than the ancient Israelitish gentleman to whom her theological views were opposed. Of course we, at this stage of scientific thought, know that Jezebel's religion was not an admirable one. Strangely enough, for a religion, it actually made her intolerant! But to Jezebel it was a truth for which she battled as bravely as Elijah did for what he imagined to be eternal verity. The facts, admitted even by the historian who hated her, prove that, notwithstanding her unfortunate and childish conception of theology, Jezebel was a brave, fearless, generous woman, so wholly devoted to her own husband that even wrong seemed justifiable to her, if she could thereby make him happy. (In that respect she seems to have entirely fulfilled the Southern Methodist's ideal of the pattern wife absorbed in her husband.) Four hundred of the preachers of her own faith were

fed at her table (what a pity we have not their opinion of their benefactor !). Elijah was the preacher of a new and rival religion, which Jezebel, naturally, regarded with that same abhorrence which the established always feel for the innovating. To her, Elijahism doubtless appeared as did Christianity to the Jews, Lutheranism to the pope, or John Wesleyism to the Church of England ; but in the days of the Israelites the world had not developed that sweet patience with heresy which animates the Andover theologians of our time, and Jezebel had as little forbearance with Elijah as had Torquemada with the Jews or Elizabeth with the Puritans.

Yet, to do Jezebel justice, we must ask ourselves, how did the assumedly good Elijah proceed in order to persuade her of the superiority of his truth ? It is painful to have to relate that that much-overestimated " man of God " invited four hundred and fifty of Jezebel's preachers to an open air exhibition of miracles, but, not satisfied with gaining a victory over them in this display, he pursued his defeated rivals in religion, shouting, " Let not one of them escape! " and thus roused the thoughtless mob of lookers-on to slaughter the whole four hundred and fifty in cold blood !

Jezebel had signalized her advent as queen by slay-

ing Israelitish preachers in order to put her own preachers in office. Elijah promptly retaliated at his earliest opportunity.

It seems to me that it would puzzle a disinterested person to decide which of those savage deeds was more "satanic" than the other, and to imagine why Jezebel is now dragged forth to "shake her gory locks" as a frightful example to the American women who ask for recognized right to self-government. I submit, that if Jezebel is a disgrace to womankind, our dear brethren at any rate have not much cause to be proud of Elijah, so, possibly, we might strike a truce over the character of these two long-buried worthies. It may be well, though, to note here that the now most offensive epithet which the English translators attached to Jezebel's name * originally signified nothing more than that she was consecrated to the worship of a religion rival to that which ancient Israel assumed to be "the only true one." (How many "only true ones" we discover as we wade through human history!) An astonishing instance of how modern men read their own modern prejudices into history, is furnished in the comments of Dr. Lord upon Jezebel, whose character he wholly misreads, even in the face of her deeds, so blinded is

* II. Kings, chap. 9, ver. 22.

he by the epithet above referred to. Dr. Lord tells us that when Jezebel's son had been killed and her forces overthrown by Jehu (a traitor and regicide, who aspired to her son's position), Jezebel adorned herself in order to beguile him and ingratiate herself into his favor. The Israelitish historian, on the contrary, tells us that Jezebel met Jehu with a scornful and defiant reproach, and, far from trying to attract him by her adornment, greeted him with the taunt which cost her her life (as she probably hoped and expected that it would), "Had Zimri happiness (or peace) after slaying his master?"

Then, in regard to the charge against Herodias, which is current among theological scandal-mongers, there is not a moderately intelligent jury of Christendom (if composed half of men and half of women) which, after examining all the available evidence, would not render a verdict in her favor of "Not Guilty." The statement that she "paid the price of her own daughter's debasement and disgrace for the head of John the Baptist," is an assertion born wholly of the ecclesiastical, distorted imagination. Not even a hint, much less an iota of proof, to warrant such an assertion, is found anywhere in history—sacred or profane. While some anonymous writer of the early Christian centuries did put in cir-

culation the charge that John the Baptist was put to death at the instigation of Herodias (without implicating her daughter's character, however), Josephus, on the contrary, explicitly declares that his death was wholly a political matter, with which the names of Herodias and her daughter are not even connected by rumor. Says Josephus : " When others came in crowds about him [John the Baptist], for they were greatly moved by hearing his words, Herod, who feared lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion (for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise) thought it best, by putting him to death, to prevent any mischief he might cause.... Accordingly he was sent a prisoner, *out of Herod's suspicious temper* (italics mine), to Macherus, the castle I before mentioned, and was there put to death."*

Now, the jury must remember that Josephus was born in Jerusalem about 38 A.D., that he was an educated man and in a position to know the facts in this case, owing both to his prominent position among the Jews and to his study of contemporaneous history. But that, on the other hand, the anonymous writers who bring Herodias' name into the

* Josephus, "Antiquity of the Jews," book 18., chap. 5.

transaction, are not traceable further back than the fourth century of our era, and that even they do not bring any charge against her character as a mother. The worst even these accuse her of is, having instigated the death of John the Baptist. I have dealt with these two stories at some length for the reason that the theologians of Christendom have started the very bad habit of, first, assuming that chastity is the one, indispensable virtue in a woman's character, lacking which neither her truthfulness, honesty, kindliness, generosity or intellectual ability, are worth consideration ; and, second, of perpetually insinuating that every woman who is displeasing to any man is probably guilty of unchastity, or some sin closely connected with it, thereby creating a whip of terror to crack over the head of any independent woman whom her political masters desire to punish.

If a man had intrigued to bring about the death of one he hated, as is charged against Herodias by the two anonymous Gospel authors, theologians might have stigmatized him as artful and blood-thirsty, but they would hardly have gone out of their way to gratuitously assume that he must have added to that infamy the other and infinitely deeper infamy of prostituting his own daughter for his own personal revenge ; and yet the crime of selling daughters is

not altogether unknown among men. It is quite in keeping with this very bad habit, that Bishop Doane now publicly prophesies that, should women be enfranchised, "money will buy their votes as it does now themselves." But have we not had enough of such cowardly flings at womanhood? Is the sale of either their votes or themselves an unheard of characteristic of men? Was it very remarkable that both men and women, so long sold by others, should have fallen into the temporary error of selling themselves? May it not even denote a step in the passage of evil toward good should women come into recognized right to dispose of both their votes and themselves according to their own judgment?

If there were nothing more to be gained from women's self-ownership and self-government than the improved condition of their own minds and bodies which is certain to follow, the struggle to establish their right to such individuality would be well worth while. But it will be impossible to gain so much liberty for woman, without delivering man from a style of biblical exegesis which is unworthy of a manly and intelligent twelve-year-old boy, and this deliverance will be a benefit to the entire human race, man himself not excepted. It is true that the worst examples of the prejudicial interpretation of the Bible are

found in the works of the older commentators, but young men, especially in illiterate and libraryless Southern states, are still stupidly following in the track of the Rev. Thomas Scott and commentators of that stamp, and pinning their faith, on the woman question, to the mediæval-minded Rev. Horace Bushnell, a man fifty years behind the present standard of knowledge in Europe and America. For an example of the sex-prejudice which inclines an obtuse man to blame all wrong-doings upon woman and to excuse his own side of the race at her expense, the following from the commentary of the Rev. Thomas Scott would be difficult to surpass. A person whose mind was free from preconceived opinion, would not hesitate to pronounce the biblical account of Solomon a mythical extravaganza, possibly one grain of truth to nine-tenths of Israelitish romance, and would bother her head very little about Solomon's opinions. But the Rev. Thomas Scott, having apparently mortgaged his common sense in order to obtain insurance for his soul's salvation, writes thus of the multitudinously-married Solomon: "It can scarcely be doubted that the Jews' tradition is well-grounded that Solomon wrote it [Ecclesiastes] when brought to deep repentance for the atrocious crimes into which he had been seduced by his idolatrous wives and concubines," and, after

explaining that the "inspired" Solomon was peculiarly qualified to preach for the reason that "None are more capable of showing the evil and misery of sin than those who have been very guilty, and then become deeply penitent," Scott excuses Solomon's bad conduct by asserting, "In his earnest search into the nature and reason of things....he had found himself betrayed into very much folly; especially he had been miserably deluded by unprincipled women, to the unspeakable anguish of his heart. All imaginable stratagems and artifices were employed by them, to ensnare men in wickedness and to hold them in bondage....Again, Solomon observed with surprise that, when he looked over his countries and his subjects, one by one,....in order to make out the number of truly pious and honest persons among them, he could find a few men of this stamp, at least one of a thousand; but a woman among all those had he not found, not one who was thoroughly faithful, upright and pious." Scott gives the inference that this probably refers to "the number of women of different countries, which he had collected for wives and concubines, as conquerors generally selected the most beautiful captives for themselves."

Now, incredible as it must seem to a mentally-emancipated person, there are actually, to-day, "or-

thodox" preachers in our country giving pulpit discourses on the text that Solomon did find one good man among a thousand, but could not discover one good woman! And, still more incredible, their audiences are chiefly composed of women so broken-spirited and, consequently, dull and stupid, that they actually have not sufficient self-respect to get up, march out in a body and give a much-needed lesson to the priest who thus maligns the human race!

Could these women be encouraged to fearlessly use just a modicum of their natural powers of judgment, they would easily discover for themselves that the Bible story does not warrant a word of Scott's conclusion that "Solomon had been miserably deluded by unprincipled women to the unspeakable anguish of his heart," nor that he was "seduced into atrocious crimes by his idolatrous wives and concubines." An important truth for mankind to learn is that no human being can possibly be seduced into any atrocious crime by another person. An *ignorant* man or woman, of strong natural passions, is like a ship without a pilot, blown about by every wind of desire, and is quite as likely to dash upon the rock of opportunity to commit atrocious crimes as to escape it. Whether such a person be what the world calls good, or bad, is very much a matter of chance. According

to the Bible, Abraham was twice upon the point of committing atrocious crimes and was only saved therefrom by direct interposition of the Almighty. Jephthah actually committed the atrocious crime of murdering his own daughter, because he happened to meet her instead of the lamb or kid which he expected to kill for a religious sacrifice. Solomon's own father, David, perpetrated the atrocious crime of murdering, by proxy, the man whose wife he wished to steal. Moses committed the most atrocious crimes conceivable to the human imagination, without the slightest rebuke from any biblical narrator, or modern theological commentator.

It is, therefore, peculiarly absurd to attribute unusual wickedness or uncommon "anguish" to Solomon, and would probably never have been thought of save for the point that the seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines, whom the Bible says he loved, were of a rival religious faith, thus offering commentators a fine peg upon which to hang all sorts of evil charges against them. The Bible does not intimate that they were "unprincipled women," nor does the Bible accuse Solomon of atrocious crimes beyond what were common and freely pardoned in ancient Israel. On the contrary, the Bible tells us that though Solomon, being a man of expansive

heart, was able to and did love his thousand consorts and respected their Gods for their sakes, he yet "loved the Lord [Jahveh, god of his tribe], walking in the statues of David his father"; and was endowed by God with so wise and understanding a heart that "all Israel saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment." (See I. Kings).

The necessity of women's work in the ministry of the Church is most forcibly revealed whenever the average theologian makes a comment on the women of the Bible. The poison of masculine Tertullianized prejudice decidedly calls for the antidote of feminine, natural, common sense. Eighteen hundred years of preaching on one side of a question has twisted Christendom into a sadly lop-sided, warped and biased condition. Nature groans for a voice from the long-enough silent sex under discussion.

As for the passages now found in the New Testament epistles of Paul, concerning women's non-equality with men and duty of subjection, there is almost no room to doubt that they are bare-faced forgeries, interpolated by unscrupulous bishops, during the early period in which a combined and determined effort was made to reduce women to silent submission, not only in the Church, but also in the home and in the state. A most laudably intended attempt to

excuse Paul for the inexcusable passages attributed to his authorship has been made by a clergyman, who, accepting them as genuine Pauline utterances, endeavors to show that they were meant to apply only to Greek female converts, natives of Corinth, and that the command to cover the head and to keep silent in public was warranted, both because veiling the head and face was a Grecian custom and because the women of Corinth were of notoriously bad character. In support of this theory our modern apologist quotes the testimony of numerous writers of antiquity who denounced Corinthian profligacy. But, setting aside the fact that the men of Corinth must always have been, at least, as bad as the women, and that a sorry case would be made out for Paul, if it were on the score of morals that he ordered Greek women to subject themselves to such men, there are yet two serious impediments in the way of this theory. In the first place, that wealthy and luxurious Corinth to which the writers quoted refer, was no longer in existence in Paul's time ; 146 B. C. it was conquered by the Romans, who killed the men, carried the women and children into slavery, and levelled the dwellings with the ground. For a whole century the site of the once famous city remained a desolate waste, but about 46 B. C., it was colonized

by some Roman immigrants, and a Romanized city, with Roman customs, it was when Paul knew it. Now, not only did the Roman women go unveiled, mingling freely in all public places with men (a fact which Paul, as citizen of a Roman province must have known), but, as I shall more fully show further on, Paul specially commends the Greek woman, Phœbe, whom he endorses as minister of the Church in the Greek city, Cenchria (a sea-port within a few miles of Corinth), and in Acts, chapter 17, we are explicitly told that the Greek converts made by Paul, in Greece, were " chief women," " honorable women."

In my opinion this is sufficient refutation of the argument of the clergyman, who strives to clear the character of Paul at the expense of the character of the women of Corinth. I will now state why I think it probable that Paul never secretly cherished, privately wrote, nor publicly uttered one syllable of the fulminations against women at present found in the New Testament, and why I believe that they were interpolations, forged in his name.

Wm. Cave, in his " Lives of the Fathers," tells us that such process of interpolating forged passages was already in vogue among ecclesiastics early in the third century, and was conducted with the most shameless audacity. Indeed, as anyone may see for

herself, Chrysostom (in Book 2 of his work on the Priesthood) openly defends his own action in practicing deception, arguing that "Deceit, when well-timed and practiced with a right intention, is so profitable that many have often been punished because they have not circumvented" (which is, literally, because they have not gained an advantage over others by cheating them !). Such was the starting-point which led Jesuitism to affirm that "the end justifies the means," and which still engenders in Protestantism the moral poison of the notion that expediency (i. e. profitableness) instead of principle (i. e. fundamental truths) should prevail as the rule of action in human associations. Giving the biography of Origen (Lives of the Fathers, vol. 1, p. 357), Cave says that Origen complained that one of his fellow-ministers, "having taken a copy of a dispute which he had with him, did afterwards cut off and add what he pleased and change it into another thing, carrying it about with him and glorifying in it....And the same foul play Origen let them know he had met with in other places, as at Ephesus and Antioch, as he there particularly relates. And if they durst do this while he was yet alive and able to right himself, what may we think they would do after his death when there were none to control them?"

But, if we turn to the works of Origen, we discover that he himself is little more scrupulous, when he tells Gregory that he wishes him to "extract from the philosophy of the Greeks what may serve as a course of study or preparation for Christianity, and from geometry and astronomy what will serve to explain the sacred scriptures, in order that all that the sons of the philosophers are wont to say about geometry and music, grammar, rhetoric and astronomy as fellow-helpers to philosophy, we may say about philosophy itself in relation to Christianity," * justifying this pilfering from the Greeks by the Israelites "borrowing" what they never meant to repay from the Egyptians! Bishop Rufinus, also, in the latter part of the fourth century, esoterically announces to his brethren that, when Jerome translated the somewhat free-thinking works of Origen, "in which a good many 'stumbling blocks' are found, he so smoothed and corrected them in his translation, that a Latin reader would meet with nothing which could appear discordant with our belief," and, calmly adds Rufinus, "His example therefore we follow." † Well did Martin Luther, familiar with patristic lore, exclaim, "Indelible characters are a chimera!" Every fairly

* "Letter to Gregory," Origen's Works, Ante-Nicene Library.

† Prologue in translation of Origen's "De Principiis."

intelligent monk, or student of Church history, knew of the multitudinous blotting-out and writing-in which had raged for hundreds of years. Erasmus asserts that it was perfectly easy for an ordinary critic to discover, in studying early Christian writings, that "every one, according to his fancy" had shaved, expunged, added to, taken away, changed and substituted, even in the books of those "whose memory is, or ought to be, sacred to us." The preface to the Benedictine edition of Basil's works (published in Paris, 1721), states that, "Perhaps there is no class of men who have more injured good study than those who have mixed up the true writings of the fathers with false ones. For how many evils have, both formerly and in the present day, sprung up from hence, nobody, who is not altogether inexperienced in ecclesiastical matters, is ignorant; doctrines are obscured, morals are polluted, history falters, tradition is disturbed; and, to express my meaning in a word, if once the genuine writings of the holy fathers are confounded with the adulterous ones, all things must necessarily be confounded together."

Now, we need only remember that Paul was, originally, no higher in authority than other Christians (as we have seen from his own statement, with none of the lofty pretensions of the "holy fathers" who suc-

ceeded him), in order to arrive at the probability that his writings shared the common fate. As we proceed in our investigations, this probability becomes certainty. From the first moment (after Paul's death) in which his letters began to be held up as authoritative utterances, their authenticity was disputed, and those who circulated the copies, made by scribes, were accused of having interpolated forged passages, in order to obtain warrant for their own sentiments. So well understood was this, that Origen consoled himself for the adulteration which his own doctrines received from the forgers, in saying that it was little wonder that he so suffered, "when the great St. Paul could not escape their hands." As I have previously stated, Marcion and Cerdo, though varying in much else, were fully agreed in regard to the mutilations, interpolations and forgeries of the epistles sent forth in the name of Paul. (Marcion, as a devoted follower of Paul's line of thought, rejected the Old Testament *in toto,* so far as its authority for Christians was concerned.) The motive for such distortion originated in the controversy between Paul and Peter, to which I have previously referred, and which is perpetuated to this day by their respective Protestant and Roman Catholic followers. Peter clung to Judaistic traditions, and accused Paul (who is identical with the

"Simon Magus" of the Clementine Homilies) of apostasy from Jesus, in that "he rejects Jerusalem and believes in his own visions." Although the Acts of the Apostles (written at a late date, to patch up the quarrel) and the various epistles of Paul, Clement and others, give us but fragmentary references to their dissensions, enough is found to show that Paul (though born a Jew) was a bold radical, who followed Jesus' example in trampling underfoot the rites, details of quibbling law and selfish spirit of Judaism, while Peter continued to the end of his days a vacillating, cowardly Jew, acting as a Jew with the Jews, but pretending to ignore Jewish customs when with the Gentile converts. It is possible, however, that the story that Peter himself was the meanest of traitors to Jesus, may have been only an attempt late in the second, or early in the third century, of the Pauline faction to belittle the pretensions of the Petrine faction, that *their* leader had been an intimate associate and specially favored disciple of Jesus. In his letter to the Galatian Christians, Paul writes, "When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain [persons] came from James, Peter did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which

were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter, before them all, 'If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles (converts) to live as do the Jews?"

Paul then exhorts the Galatians not to be led astray by the example of Peter, but to stand fast in the new liberty, in the freedom from law, initiated by Jesus. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free," emphatically asseverated Paul, "there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one [equivalent] in Christ Jesus....Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. We, brethren, are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free." In spite of the miserably tangled web spread before us in New Testament and general patristic literature, it is possible to trace three consistent threads. One is, that Jesus broke away from all Jewish traditions and customs, teaching his fellow countrymen and women doctrines strikingly like those of his predecessor, Gautama, the Buddha; the second is, that Paul followed Jesus closely in doctrine, and put

it into practice by extending fellowship to the "Gentiles" (that is, to all kinds of foreigners); the third is, that Peter, though nominally accepting the teaching of Jesus, did not imbibe its spirit, and secretly clung to the ceremonies of his ancestors, while striving to affiliate with Christians.

Now, the sentiment concerning the equality of male and female, which Paul avowed to the Galatians, is perfectly in accord with what "Luke" reports of Jesus' own custom. It will be remembered that the chief adherents of Paul accepted only this report (and this only partly) as worthy of credit; and therein we find the statement that many female ministers had accompanied Jesus and the male ministers, as they wandered (in Salvation Army fashion) "throughout every city and village preaching." It is true that we now find a qualifying passage in reference to the female ministers, namely, "which ministered unto him of their substance" (Luke ch. 8, v. 3). But this is, plainly, one of those numerous marginal comments, made at late date (when all the original manuscripts had disappeared), by men who had, doubtless, lost knowledge of women's original equality in the ministry; for Ignatius of Antioch, one of the earliest Christian writers, expressly affirms that the diakonia (deacons) were "not ministers of meats and

drinks, but ministers of the Church of God." Although this is well-known, our modern theologians seem to have been unable to avoid jumping to the conclusion that, whenever *women* are mentioned in the ministry, it must be only as ministers of their substance, either as a kind of commissaries, or, at most, as kindergarten officials. It is, manifestly, true that the early Church was immensely indebted to the benefactions of rich widows and virgin heiresses for the means of sustaining life in its fellowship. Thecla, Paula, Eustochium, Marcella, Melanie, Susanna, are but a few of the women of wealth who gave both themselves and their large fortunes to the establishment of the ethics of Jesus. Yet Paula's greatest work (from men's standpoint of great works) is rarely mentioned in Christendom, and it is significant of the degradation which women suffered at the hands of the Church that the time came when Churchmen could not believe that she had performed it even with Jerome's acknowledgment confronting them, and consequently erased the word "sister" accompanying the name Paula, substituting therefor the word "brother!" Paula founded and endowed monasteries, won to the Christian cause allegiance from one of the noblest families of Greece and Rome, and originated within the

monasteries the occupation of copying manuscripts, to which civilization is indebted for the preservation of much precious literature; but her most important service to the Church was her colabor with Jerome in the great task of translating the Jewish scriptures from the original Hebrew into Latin. It was Paula who suggested and inspired the undertaking, furnishing the expensive works of reference, without which it would have been impossible, and being herself a woman of fine intellect, highly trained, and an excellent Hebrew scholar, Paula revised and corrected Jerome's work; then, finally, assisted by her brilliant daughter, Eustochium, performed the enormous task of copying it accurately for circulation. It was the least that Jerome could do to dedicate the completed work to those able coadjutors, and it is an amazing thing to find Churchmen still eulogizing Jerome as "author of the Vulgate" without the slightest reference to the fact that, but for Paula's help, the Vulgate would not have come into existence. But until men and women return to more natural relations, until women cast off their false subserviency, thereby helping men to get rid of their unnatural arrogance, nothing different from the injustice Christendom has shown Paula can be looked for.

It was not so with the Paul who approved of

Phœbe, minister of the church at Cenchrea, the Paul who hailed Priscilla and Junia as his fellow-apostles, and who commended the apostolic work of Mary, Julia, Claudia, and other bishops. That Paul, undoubtedly, was a close imitator of Jesus, and he defends his own similar custom of travelling about with women in the apostolate, as follows: "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free....Have we [Barnabas and Paul] not power [or right] to accompany women in the ministry, as well as other apostles?" (I. Corinthians ch. 9, verses 1 to 5). In his letter to the Philippians (ch. 4, v. 3) he thus refers to women who were his coadjutors in the ministry of the Church: "I entreat thee also, true yoke-fellows, help those women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow-laborers, whose names are in the book of life." Now, the Greek verb there translated "laboured," is derived from the contest for the prizes in the public games of Greece, and refers, unmistakably, to those women who, as honorable competitors, were (as Paul says elsewhere in the same letter) pressing toward the mark for the prize of a high calling. Paul takes it for granted that the Church is well-acquainted with the names of the women who had distinguished themselves in joint ministry with himself and Clem-

ent, but, little dreaming that his letter would ever be published to the world, he leaves us in the dark concerning them. Is it possible that any woman of average intelligence can fail to perceive that it is simply absurd to claim that Paul could ever have written the clumsy passages now found in I. Corinthians, chapter 11, in Ephesians, chapter 5, and, that it is especially impossible that the Paul who repudiated all relation with the "bondwoman," could have uttered that pompous declaration in I. Timothy, chapter 2: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over man, but to be in silence: for Adam was first formed and then Eve, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression"? Indeed, the only reference which the genuine Paul, the helper of women in the ministry, makes to the Garden of Eden story (and this early in his career), is to "*Adam*'s transgression," the "one *man* by whom sin entered into the world," though, even there, he makes haste to explain, "Now we are delivered from the law," as formerly held by the Jews, "for the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from that law of sin and death." (Letter to the Romans.)

In view of *the whole* of what is given us as Paul's

life and letters, we must pronounce the woman-despising passages palpable forgeries and very bungling forgeries at that. We arrive at such conclusion by the same rule of reasoning which would lead us to reject a letter that might be offered us as a copy of an epistle of William Lloyd Garrison's, should such document contain the dictum: "Let Negroes learn and live in silence with all subjection. I suffer not a Negro to teach, nor to usurp authority over white people, but to be in slavery, for Genesis decrees, 'Cursed be Canaan,' a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." Such a letter could be genuine only in case Garrison had been a life-long, senseless hypocrite—a kind of hypocrite who had nothing to gain by his hypocrisy. As no evidence exists that Garrison was a foolish hypocrite, and as perfectly satisfactory evidence exists that he was so peculiarly honest that he would not only not deceive even when it might have been pecuniarily profitable to him, but would not even disguise his unpopular opinions by keeping silence, no reasoning person could be made to accept as genuine an utterance contradicted by all that is known of Garrison's life and character. In Paul's case, the anti-woman passages place us between the two horns of the dilemma, either that Paul was a pompous hypocrite, or that he never enunciated

such sentiments. As Dr. Hatch admits, the Christian world knows precious little about Paul, but the simplest exercise of reason is sufficient to show, that that little refutes the passages upon which misogynists rely in order to obtain some form of Christian warrant for subjecting women to men.

The pure democracy of the primitive followers of Jesus appears to have resorted, from the first, to the practice of elections of some one as temporary leader; and such minister, chosen from and by his or her fellow-ministers, seems to have received a formal installation in the office of temporary servant of the others. Now, in the "Apostolical Constitutions," a collection of ecclesiastical regulations (of uncertain date, but published as having come from the earliest Church), we find the special form of installation, or ordination, which was used when a woman was elected to the ministry. * It should be stated that modern opinions in regard to the date of these "Constitutions" vary greatly, ranging from Whiston's fantastic claim, that they were "the most sacred of

* It is highly probable that that which is now known as the "Second Epistle of John," addressed to "The elect lady and her children," refers to a duly ordained female bishop and her religious flock, for in the following epistle, "John" speaks of his own pastoral charge as "my children," and the epistle to the "elect lady" is manifestly a theological communication from one apostle to another.

the canonical books of the New Testament," and that they were "delivered at Jerusalem, and in Mt. Sion, by our Saviour to the eleven apostles there assembled after the resurrection," to the more sober claim of those who guess that their date belongs to the Nicene age (the fourth century), or, possibly, to as late a period as the fifth or sixth century. The important point, however, is only that these "Constitutions" prove that in primitive Christianity women were regularly ordained for the ministry of the Church. There can be no question of two leading facts concerning that ministry, namely, that women were regarded, both by their friends and foes, as possessed of even supernatural powers as preachers, and that men of jealous disposition were, from the start, opposed to women's officiation in the ministry. Clement of Rome, one of their friends, publicly declared, "prophecy is found in the women" (see Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians), and, in referring to what he considered an Old Testament example of woman's prophetic powers, Clement exhorts men, "Let us therefore be lowly minded, brethren, laying aside all arrogance and conceit and folly and anger, and let us do that which is written; for the Holy Ghost saith: Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, nor the strong in his strength, neither the rich in

his riches ; but he that boasteth, let him boast in the Master, that he may seek him out, and do judgment and righteousness ; most of all remembering the words of the Lord Jesus which he spake, teaching forbearance and longsuffering ; for thus he spake : Have mercy, that ye may receive mercy ; forgive, that it may be forgiven to you. As ye do, so it shall be done to you. As ye give so it shall be given unto you. As ye judge, so shall ye be judged. As ye show kindness, so shall kindness be shown unto you. With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured withal to you. Therefore it is right and proper, brethren, that we should be obedient unto God, rather than follow those who in arrogance and unruliness have set themselves up as leaders in abominable jealousy.... For Jesus is with them that are lowly of mind, not with them that exalt themselves over the flock."

Even Tertullian, upon his first entrance into the brother- and sisterhood (he went through many changes afterward) recognizes women as legitimately among the prophets, or preachers (see his treatise "On the Soul"), and mentions, approvingly, the prophetic sister whose views on the soul (they were, by the way, grossly absurd) chanced to meet with favor in his sight. Ambrose, writing of the ministerial office (391 A. D.) exhorts widows to remain in

widowhood so long as they fill the sacred office, as "those who have received the gift of the holy ministry must keep it immaculate, unviolated by any conjugal union." (See "De Officiis Ministrorum.") Origen, in the century previous, had explained that those whom the Christians held as prophets "were inspired by the Holy Ghost,"* and he speaks of the ministry of women in the Church as both existing and necessary, but, in justice to Origen (who was one of the more rational "Fathers") it must be said that he was careful to declare that the pre-eminence of Jesus as a religious leader was simply due to the preaching of "a pure morality, which is now done in his name throughout the world." (Origen's idea of "the world," however, was of a very limited space.) Now, with the above in mind, we are prepared to comprehend the following form of ordination for apostolic sisters, which has come down to us in the "Apostolical Constitutions":

"Eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of man and woman; thou who didst fill with thy spirit Miriam, Deborah, Hannah and Huldah;

* The tendency of fallible men to elevate their own pet systems at the expense of others, is amusingly shown in Origen's assertion that the priestesses of Paganism were only inspired "by demons, such as are cast out by the simplest of Christians. . . . None now utter prophecies save Christians"!

....look down now also upon this thy handmaid, and bestow on her the Holy Ghost, that she may worthily perform the work committed to her, to thy honor, and the glory of Christ." (The "Holy Ghost," or "Holy Spirit," is feminine in Hebrew.)

Now, while it is necessary, in the interest of historical truth, to show what opinions were really held concerning women's "inspiration," and what was their real apostolic position in the ministry of the simple-minded early Christians, it is equally necessary to point out the danger of the fallacious theory that any human being can speak with infallible authority inspired either by "demons" or by "Holy Ghosts." Origen and his brethren rendered a valuable service to the whole human race in helping to free the world from the childish superstition of antiquity, namely, credulous belief in the divine inspiration of the Pagan priestesses; and Tertullian extended this service in helping to free the modern world from similar superstition in regard to Christian prophetesses; for, breaking the yoke of superstition placed on the human neck by priestesses and prophetesses, was an indispensable preliminary to delivering mankind from the yoke of superstition still maintained by prophets and priests.

Out of gratitude to the service men have rendered

in exposing the pretensions of ignorant and, therefore, self-deceived women, it is now women's highest duty to return a similar service to the world, in exposing the quackery of ignorant and self-deceived men, who have professed, or still profess, to speak with unquestionable authority concerning matters of theology, religious doctrines or dogmas. So long as men and women continue to be men and women, every word uttered by either must be questionable. There can be no such thing as an infallible truth uttered by a mortal concerning the immortals: there can be no infallible truth delivered by a finite being concerning infinite beings. In regard to the finite, all mortals stand on one common plane of imagination, hope, probability. The sooner we perceive this self-evident truth, the sooner a much-needed era of perfectly free thought and of mutual human toleration for widely opposed religious opinions will set in.

The childish theory of the "divine inspiration" of priestesses kept all antiquity in leading-strings some thousands of years after the human race ought to have been able to think for itself. While that theory prevailed, the best and wisest men and women lived under a reign of terror, and new knowledge could only crawl, haltingly, from one secret initiate to another who was sworn by dreadful vows never to reveal

to the multitude that which, as Strabo says, all philosophers knew to be the truth. Scarcely had the ancient theory of the deliverance of "heavenly revelation" by priestesses and "inspired" women begun to die a natural death, before men began to rise into prominence as "revealers of God's will" (always, alas! a very poor, mischief-making, palpably human will), and the modern theory of the "divine inspiration" of the Jews and of the early Christians—Paul, Peter, James, and so on—began to fill Christendom with fierce quarrelling, hatred, persecution, torture and death. It is this immensely foolish fallacy of authoritative "revelation" which still foments hatred between the Roman Catholic and Protestant followers of the teacher whose only gospel was that of love betweeen human beings, the teacher who said, "If a man who hateth his brother say, 'I love God,' he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" and who taught, "By this shall all men know that ye are my followers, that ye have love one to another": "He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."

As women, in this era, compose the bulk of adherents to the "revelation" theory, it is they who must deliver the world from the curse of theology-

engendered hatred, by setting themselves mutually free from that most pernicious fallacy. They must *think* their own way out of this bondage, for, as Jesus well said, as one thinketh, so is she. It is not enough that a man or woman claims to be "inspired," speaks with uncommon wisdom, points to the multitudes who credulously accept such pretensions, or even to the admitted fact that many of these credulous believers are in many respects very intelligent. There has been no theological doctrine so monstrously absurd, among all the grotesque absurdities conceived by the still imperfectly working human brain, from Tertullian to Joseph Smith, from the All-Friend Jemima to Madame Blavatsky, or Mrs. Eddy, that it could not find a large number, even of the best-educated people, to swallow it blindly, *for a time.* Tertullian actually taught that the more absurdly impossible a dogma appeared to the reason, the greater the virtue of the blind faith which professed belief in it! Such teaching places mankind below the level of intelligent brutes. It is no wonder that it led numbers of early Christians to live in caves or to burrow, nearly naked, in the ground, like wild beasts, suffering such self-imposed tortures as only de-humanized man can know. (See Jerome's letter on the Celibate Life.)

The human race is guided by its own ideas, and only by its ideas. If thought were left perfectly free from ban of legislative or ecclesiastical censor, the best thoughts would as naturally prevail over the worst as the best seeds of the forest naturally triumph over the worst seeds. When the race was childish, it thought as a child, spoke as a child, understood as a child. After all these thousands of years, it still only sees life's meaning as through a glass, darkly. We are now coming to the maturity of experience, which should help us to put away childish things. Faith, hope and love will always abide, as they ever have done, for these are passions inherent in our very nature, and love was able to cling to life even under the unspeakable horrors of the Romish Inquisition, the Protestant persecutions of Roman Catholics, and the general Christian slaughters for witchcraft. Our race experience should now help us to reject slavery to the mean, cowardly ideas begotten of the myths of Eve and Pandora, and help us to choose voluntary service to the noble idea of trust in our common human nature. The most profoundly vital idea of mankind is that which concerns the right relation of the sexes, and the only revelation concerning this relation is found in a study of Nature and of universal human experience. If there be such a thing as the

"Word of God," it must be in the one common book—accessible to all races—the book of Nature. Of this book only may we say, adapting the words of Martin Luther: It is the common heritage of the whole human race, each member of which may make himself or herself competent to understand it.

But the first lesson we should learn is, that no member, even here, can ever justly force her own understanding upon another. The goal toward which we are tending is self-enlightenment and self-control. Well said Gregory Nazianzen: "Unworthy men are rushing into the ministry led by ambition....The difficulty of governing men is much greater than the leading of flocks. If it is difficult for men to obey, how much more difficult is it to command, especially in divine matters, in which the greater the authority committed to one, the greater is his peril!....Even [if possessed of] all virtue, I do not see how one can undertake, without fear, such a leadership. For to rule mankind, the most variable of all animals, seems to me the art of arts, the science of sciences." One thousand and five hundred years have rolled away since Gregory thus wrote, and the awful misgovernment of those who set themselves up as qualified to govern, is fast convincing the world that Milton spoke truly in pronouncing mankind's attempt to

forcibly rule mankind execrable presumption, without warrant from God or Nature. Notwithstanding the temporary guidance which one individual may seek, or voluntarily accept from one, or from many others, the only safe principle for social conduct is the principle of supreme self-government. Never should a sane adult abdicate self-sovereignty. If that guide which Nature has given to each one of us—the human reason—has often led us astray, how can we intelligently look to another's reason for infallible service ?

All religion, ultimately, comes down to one sentiment, that is, to a desire of congenial association for the purpose of seeking goodness and truth. Its sole power for righteousness and helpfulness to its members, lies in the proportion of love, knowledge and freedom which animates these members. The religion of Paul is no better than that of Peter, the religion of Luther no improvement upon that of the pope, that of John Wesley no advance upon Anglicism, Madame Blavatsky's no better than Joseph Smith's, Mrs. Eddy's borrowed conglomerate no better than common " orthodoxy," if each of these begin to set up dogmas that must be believed, teachers that must be deified, and ecclesiastical systems that are rigid and thus, from their very nature, retrograde.

It was the desire to make knowledge a preserve, in which one or a despotically ruling few, alone, should speak with "authority," which slowly changed the simple religion of Jesus into that detestable system of ecclesiasticism which has cursed the world with its vain pretensions and horrible cruelty for hundreds of years. The teaching of Jesus, as far as we can judge from the contradictory reports of those who, manifestly, only partly understood him, seems to have been simplicity itself. No one now pretends that he ever wrote a syllable or dictated a word concerning himself, his mission, or his opinions, and, as I have stated, it has so far been impossible to prove that any acount of his life or work was written either by any one of his contemporaries or by any writer of the first century.

Not an original manuscript of any gospel or epistle can be traced further back than four hundred years after Jesus' death. Women must disabuse their minds of the common superstition that there has been some sort of miraculous preservation of Jewish and Christian sacred writings. As they may easily verify for themselves, those shared the usual fate of human products—utter loss of some which it would be desirable to have, and preservation of many which are little more than pure trash and incoherent nonsense.

"Not a fragment from the hand of any evangelist or apostle survived the early generations that used the original manuscripts and wore them out. The writing was on papyrus or parchment, and ran in continuous lines with no spaces between the words, no capitals or stops. All the headings that we now find to the New Testament books were placed there at a late date according to pure supposition, the address of the various epistles being guessed at from their contents. As copies multiplied, they varied more or less from the originals and from each other; the copyists confounding similar letters or words, substituting a synonym for a given term, introducing something from a parallel passage or a marginal comment, or making other alterations intentional or even unintentional, as the copyist tried to harmonize seeming discrepancies or to explain what seemed obscure. These variations, altogether, number 120,000. There are from 1,600 to 2,000 places where the true reading is in doubt."

There was not even a catalogue of "New Testament" writings until Christianity had existed as a simple cult for four hundred years. Down to the middle of the second century Christianity was, chiefly, much such a loving recollection of a good man as, to-day, inspires men and women to meet and

recite the sayings and eulogize the character of Walt Whitman. Astonishing as it must now seem to a devout Roman Catholic, Methodist or Episcopalian, the principal complaint against the Christians, down to the close of the second century, was that they were "anarchists" and "atheists"! At the present time, even such conservative Christian theologians as Professor Bowne (I quote second hand, from the Rev. Dr. Daniel Whedon) admit that "we cannot know, with absolute knowledge, that a personal God exists," and the ancient Jew, the Hindu philosopher and the Christian theologian are now able to agree that God is invisible, unsearchable, incomprehensible, beyond all human likeness and unattainable to human thought. The unbelieving "fool" no longer finds it necessary to say, "There is no God," in order to protect himself from dictates imposed by men, for the believing fools now admit that this is a subject upon which no one can dogmatise. The world seems now ready to agree with the Hindu, Patanjali, that God is simply "The pure, absolute good, longed for by every created being."

But, 1,800 years ago, the case was very different. Pagan Europe then had a system of theology, established and supported as a state institution, which depicted heaven as a kingdom in which the primal law-

giver was the Good and Great Mother of the Gods, variously known as Themis, Ops, or Bona Dea, etc., and whose sons and daughters—Juno and Jupiter, Minerva, Artemis, Ceres, Diana, Venus, Mars, and so on—were sharers of her divine authority. The simple ethics of Jesus—rising among the citizens of Rome, in opposition to that primordially rooted and powerful system; passing among humble folks who turned their backs upon the temples, refusing to pay the tithes and furnish the materials for the "sacrifices" which supported the priestesses and priests; denying the existence of all the great and famous Gods whom the most learned, high-born, rich and powerful people of the world had worshipped for thousands of years, declaring that the only kingdom of heaven is that which mankind makes for itself out of its own rightly-lived life—such teaching was, indeed, a doctrine easily chargeable with "anarchy" and "atheism." It controverted every notion of law and order, every custom—religious, political and domestic *—and every article of faith at that time cher-

* One of the offenses which the ever half-Pagan Tertullian urged against Paul's follower, Marcion, was that he "abolished the nuptial bond," that is, he dispensed with the priestly marriage ceremony instituted, originally, by the Pagan priests of Rome, but rejected by all Christians down to the end of the second century, when it was introduced among them by a bishop of Rome, and gradually made obligatory.

ished by the Romans, Jews, Greeks, and Scandinavians.

In this mental attitude of male toward female, men have always naturally fallen into three classes, as follows: First, the men who unduly exalt and worship certain feminine powers as "divine" (literally, "of the highest order of excellence") and above anything possible of attainment by men; second, the men who regard femaleness as inherently, ineradicably inferior to maleness; and, third, the men who consider male and female of exactly equal worth to the human species, and who believe that all really excellent attainments of the feminine heart may be developed in the masculine heart, while the similar attainments of the masculine intellect are within easy reach of the feminine brain. The first class it was, which, prevailing in the childhood of the race, long maintained the worship of the mythical Great Mother, mother of all the living—both of Gods and men. So deeply-rooted and widespread was this worship at the time when the religion of Jesus began to declare the supremacy of the Father, that it is little wonder that ecclesiastical Christianity was early called upon to make a compromise between the rival adherents of motherhood and of fatherhood.

The latter sought to eliminate the worship of the

oldest of all trinities, namely, the worship of the Mother, the Daughter (or the Son) and the Father, and to substitute a new trinity which consisted of three males, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The former were willing to accept the new order of rank for the Father and Son, permanently omitting (and thus depreciating) the Daughter, but they stood firm as a rock of ages for the retention of the Great Mother. It was profound agitation over the attempt to substitute worship of the new and mysterious masculine Holy Ghost, in place of the ancient cult of the Great Mother of the Gods, which during a whole century rent Christendom in twain and convulsed the excited people with the bitter controversies of their fanatical, rival leaders.

Nothing could be more ludicrous than the recent comment of a Protestant clergyman that, "It was indeed a lofty faith which had enabled Athanasians for fifty years, through all perils, to advocate the consubstantial Trinity; but it was only a pitiful superstition which led the fanatic monks of Alexandria to shout for the 'Mother of God.'" The truth is, that the struggle was between two rival creeds, one of which upheld the supremacy of the primordial ideal Woman, while the other labored to inaugurate the supremacy of the comparatively new ideal Man,

and the "pitiful superstition" attending the struggle may best be characterized as "six of one and half dozen of the other." As all students of that period know, it ended in a compromise which deified Mary, the human mother of the newly deified human son, Jesus, and down to the fifteenth century, all Christendom, while nominally according first rank to the Father, actually paid to mother Mary the concentrated devotion gathered from the human race's former worship of Isis, Ishtar, Bau, Athena, or Minerva, Diana, Ops, Ceres, and a host of other goddesses, each of whom had represented some special feminine attribute. The attempt of the Protestant party since the fifteenth century to violently destroy the worship of Mary has but had the usual effect of violence, that is, to increase the intensity of the worship. In vain have councils, canons and many popes even decreed that Mary must receive inferior reverence. St. Lignori, canonized by Pope Gregory XVI. in this century and commended by Cardinal Wiseman as a leader of Christians, gives the following model prayer to Christendom to be used in the worship of Mary (the humble Jewish carpenter's wife!): "Queen of heaven and of earth! Mother of God! My sovereign mistress! I present myself before you as a poor mendicant before a mighty queen. From the

height of your throne deign to cast your eyes upon a miserable sinner, and lose not sight of him till you render him truly holy. O illustrious Virgin! you are the queen of the universe, and consequently mine. I desire to consecrate myself more particularly to thy service; dispose of me according to your good pleasure. Direct me; I abandon myself wholly to your conduct. Chastise me, if I disobey you. I am, then, no longer mine; I am all yours." The encyclical letter of Pope Gregory, widely published among Catholics, in 1832, ends: "And that all may have a successful and happy issue, let us raise our eyes to the most blessed Virgin Mary, *who alone destroys heresies, who is our greatest hope, yea, the entire ground of our hope!*" (Italics mine.)

Absurdly enough, those belated Protestants who superstitiously continue to worship Mary's son, pronounce the worship of Mary herself as "blasphemy!" Truly, whom superstition would destroy, it first makes mad. The world can be rescued from idolatry of Woman only by cessation of the idolatry of Man; and only by the spread of rationalism can either be converted into that rightful, loving esteem, which male and female should mutually cherish, both for the living and the dead. Under the blind leadership of ignorant priests, who abjured their own ration-

ality, the blind masses of Christendom have stumbled back into the very ditch from which Jesus sought to extricate the priest-ridden! The Roman, Anglican and Episcopalian sects are now held in the ditch of superstition through blind worship of "The Church"; the Methodists, Presbyterians, and others, through blind worship of "The Book." But the time long ago foretold by that noble and remarkable Roman Catholic priest, the Rev. Dr. A. Geddes, is rapidly approaching—the time when Protestantism shall deliver itself from fetish-worship of The Book, and climb to nobler heights, while Catholicism shall advance to the intellectual liberty which *Protestant principles* have long guaranteed to Protestantism. Dr. Geddes (leader of the van of rational students of the Bible) said :*

"The Hebrew Scriptures I have examined and appreciated, as I would any other writings of antiquity; and I have bluntly and honestly delivered my sentiments of their merit and demerit, their beauties or imperfections, as becomes a free and impartial examiner. I am well aware that this freedom will, by the many, be considered an audacious license, and the cry of *heresy ! infidelity ! irreligion !* will resound from shore to shore. But my peaceful mind has long

* "Critical Remarks on the Hebrew Scriptures," vol. I., p. 5.

been prepared for, and, indeed, accustomed to, such harsh Cerberean barkings; and experience has made me (not naturally insensible) callous to every injury that ignorance or malice may have in store for me.

"I only enter my protest against downright misrepresentation and calumny. I disclaim and spurn the imputation of irreligion and infidelity. I believe as much as I find sufficient motives of credibility for believing; and without sufficient motives of credibility there can be no rational belief. Indeed, the great mass of mankind have no rational belief. The common Papist and the common Protestant are here on almost equal terms....The common Papist rests his faith on the supposed *infallibility* of his *Church*....He reads in his catechism, or is told by his catechist, that *the Church cannot err in what she teaches*, and then he is told that this unerring Church is composed only of those who hold communion with the Bishop of Rome, and believe precisely as he and the bishops who hold communion with him believe. From that moment reason is set aside; authority usurps its place, and implicit faith is the necessary consequence....He dares not doubt: for in his table of sins, which he is obliged to confess, he finds *doubting in matters of faith* to be a grievous crime.

"But, on the other hand, is the faith of the com-

mon Protestant better founded? He rests it on a *book* called the Holy Bible, which he believes to be the *infallible Word of God,* before he has read or can read it; and he sits down to read it with this prepossession in his mind, that he is reading the *infallible Word of God*....His belief, then, is as implicit as is that of the common Papist, and his motives of believing even less specious.

"On the whole, then, I think it may be laid down as an axiom, that the bulk of Christians, whether Papists or Protestants, cannot be said to have a rational faith; because their motives of credibility are not rational motives, but the positive assertion of an assumed authority, which they have never discussed, or durst not question. Their religion is the fruit of unenlightened credulity."

Jesus designed to revive the use of reason, and it cannot be too oft repeated, his earliest followers laid great stress upon reason as the testing power in all things presenting themselves to human beings. This feature of primitive Christianity is strikingly portrayed in the open letter which Justin addressed to the Emperor Hadrian in rebuttal of the popular accusation that Christians were "anarchists" and "atheists," bent on undermining government and "the true religion" of Paganism. As that which

Justin then wrote is still appropriate to those who imagine that the authority of antiquity is sufficient to stop human progress, I quote part of it here: "Reason directs that all who are truly disposed to love right-doing and knowledge should honor and love that alone which is true, refusing to follow the opinion of the ancients, should they prove to be worthless; for sound reason requires that we should not only reject those who do or teach anything wrong, but that by every means, and before his own life, the lover of truth ought, even with threatened death, to choose to speak and to do what is right.... The naming of a name, then, implies neither good nor evil, apart from the actions which are connected with that name;....As we should not think it right, if convicted of any crime, to ask to be acquitted for the sake of the name, so, on the other hand, if we be found guilty of no wrong, either through our adoption of a name or through our mode of life, it is your duty to take anxious care that you do not, by unjustly punishing the innocent, justly bring punishment on yourselves. From a name, then, neither praise nor punishment can rightly spring, unless something be produced good or bad in practice."*

Justin then declares that the charge of atheism was

* "First Apology of Justin," paragraphs 2 and 4.

made by demons even against the good and wise Socrates, and that, so far as such creatures are concerned, Christians confess themselves to be atheists, but not with respect to belief in divine righteousness, sobriety and all other virtues. It is most instructive, however, of the fallibility of poor human nature to note that Justin, while in the very act of pleading for the right of dissent from Paganism's established religious opinions, yet inveighs against Marcion, the close friend and imitator of Paul, on the ground that Marcion dissents from Justin! Could anything better illustrate the danger of the pernicious theory, perpetually rising in crude brains, that one individual can fix a circumference of truth for others? Justin's Apology demonstrates that Christianity, in its days of poverty and obscurity, was very mild and pacificatory to other religions more powerful than itself, but that, from an early date, the spirit of intolerance lurked within its tenets, ready to fly out against free thought, in spite of Origen's protest to Celsus (about 250 A. D.) that, "Christians do not revile and hate one another on account of differences of opinion." The spirit of religious hatred will never be laid permanently low, until each human being is willing to concede to every other, "I may be wrong, and you may be right, in regard to the points whereupon we

differ." Truth is no more a thing to be settled by authority now, than it was seventeen hundred and forty-five years ago. Reason still directs that we should honor and love that alone which is truth to us, individually, whether our opponents brand our truth with the names of "irreligion," "atheism," "strong-minded femaleism," "free love," "anarchy," or "revolution."

As intelligence grows, the spiteful epithets of narrow and weak-minded authority-lovers will, more and more, act as badly thrown boomerangs, wreaking their worst effect upon the thrower's own head. The new ministry of women should be directed toward sweeping away the accumulation of priestly theories, which have gathered like a thick cloud of dust, obscuring the germs of truth and wisdom scattered through the writings of women and men of all races, all countries, all ages. It is as true now as it was seventeen centuries ago, that human beings should help each other in the newness of the spirit of love, and not prate, in the oldness of the letter of dogma concerning "superior sex," or "superior races," "our own homes," "our own state," "our own country," or "our own religion." Such phrases continually on the lips of man or woman are sure mark of the beast selfishness, yet selfishness was the special beast which Jesus sought

to overthrow. If God be a just Parent of mankind, it is impossible that there can ever have been any choice of one sex, one race, or one peculiar people, to receive special favors not shown to others. We must be careful in theorizing about God not to ascribe a lower standard of justice to an ideal Divine Parent, than that which we now consider none too high for a fallible human parent, and we must remember that the very essence of justice from a human parent towards children is absolute impartiality.

Any ordinary woman need only exercise ordinary feminine judgment in reading the interesting literature of the ancient Jews, that is, the "Old Testament," to recognize that, by their own confessed history, they stand exposed as neither a peculiar people, nor a people specially favored by any supernatural power, nor a people more religious, nor even more non-atheistic than other people. Down to six hundred years before our era, the Jews throughout the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, were still perpetuating their original worship of "the queen of heaven" (the Great Mother of all Semitic races) as always had done their fathers, their kings, their princes, and the people of the land before them. (See the admissions of Jeremiah, a would-be reformer of the original Jewish polytheism, in chapter 7, verse

18, and chapter 44, verses 16 to 21 of the book bearing his name.) It is hopelessly absurd to claim that the Jews began their career worshipping one God, a Father in heaven. Monotheism was their latest and most extraordinary achievement, did not even arise among them until after their return from captivity in Babylon, and was then conceived only in the form of making a male, tribal god, Jahveh, into a superior god among other gods. Hebrew scriptures, like Christian scriptures, are simply the erring opinions of many men and women of many minds, some of whom were polytheists, some monotheists, some pure atheists (as, for instance, the unknown author of Ecclesiastes *), and it is the idlest waste of time to endeavor to make the statements or opinions of that anonymous, miscellaneous host fall into coherent narrative or harmonious doctrinal agreement. As has been happily said, the Bible is simply a public library, and only in dealing with it precisely as with any other public library, can one approach it understandingly. Some of the writers were mystics, some symbolizers ; some were collectors of old, musty and worthless genealogies ; some were credulous retailers

* Who avows the sentiments of an atheist, even with the name of God on his lips, as see in chap. III., ver. 19–22; chap. IV., ver. 1–4; chap. IX., ver. 2–6, and elsewhere.

of foolish myths and fabulous traditions ; some philosophers, holding stoutly to reason ; some were hidebound priests ; some were would-be reformers of the evils encouraged or condoned by the priests ; some were admirers of the savage improvisations of savage Deborah and savage David ; some were sweet singers of love, purity and kindness, and so on. In short, the writers were men and women of like passions with ourselves, whose ghosts would be amazingly astounded if they should discover that we have fallen into the stupidity of worshipping their imperfect productions.

As we lay aside our selfish prejudices and study the history of the past, we inevitably reach the conclusion that, whether black-skinned, red, yellow, brown or white ; whether large-brained or small ; whether highly developed or little developed ; whether male or female, Jew or Gentile, bond or free, our original nature is the same, our capacity for variation unlimited, our right to self-government equal, and that our vocation is to do whatever we can do and wish to do, provided, only, that it does not invade or restrict the equal liberty of others. Women's right to officiate in the ministry of the Church (which is wholly dependent upon their own sympathies and support for its existence) is, like their right to officiate in the service

of their own political government, a purely human right, to be re-established as men establish masculine rights, by persistent assertion that they are rights. The retrogressive men who to-day oppose "womanhood rights," are a class who oppose all right of self-government, though they have no better support for their theory that some are qualified and entitled to govern others than that which the ancient Hindu theologians put forward as the foundation of their stationary world. Such opposers of women's self-government are men who assume that mankind is divinely divided into classes with certain "allotted places" and "assigned duties," and that God has marked out special vocations for men and women, generally places of power, glory and reward for a few men, and considerable liberty of choice for all men, but places of self-sacrifice, obscurity and subjection for women. These advocates of women's subordination to men appear to think it is, also, part of a "divine plan" that the mass of the people shall toil unceasingly, unrepiningly and laboriously, everlastingly paying tithes of their bitterly produced earnings for the support of a costly and showy system of religious and political governors.

Having no faith in self-government, these advocates of "the discipline of reverence and modesty"

(for other people) are filled with wrath at any proposal or attempt to extend critical examination into their own lofty pretensions of usefulness, and vehemently pronounce that to throw off their yoke would be equivalent to no government, that is, to "anarchy!"

But let us not be terrified by the naming of a name. The only anarchy from which society has ever suffered is that no-government which pretends to govern, while it really only pursues the selfish, greedy and pompous ends of classes who wish to aggrandize themselves at the expense of the ignorant masses. Genuine chaos begins as soon as one woman or one man undertakes to constrain others to pay taxes and tithes according to arbitrary rule. A French revolution is simply the natural culmination of the chaos instituted by the despotic rule of those who arrogate right to rule. The true anarchists are found under the masks of Authority. It was these whom Jesus condemned in the exceedingly plain terms, "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! blind guides (or governors) who strain at a gnat and swallow a camel; whited sepulchres, which, indeed, appear beautiful outwards, but within are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness, serpents, generation of vipers." Who that looks beneath the surface of affairs in Christen-

dom and beholds the wretched children, "abandoned" women, and host of miserable, mind-dwarfed, bodily-diseased, soul-and-heart-distorted specimens of human nature, produced under the government of those men who pretend that they are, as Bishop Doane says, "qualified to govern,"—who, thus enligtened, can doubt that we have had quite enough of limited male government over subjected women?

Urging the continued subjection of women to men, Bishop Doane refers us to Nature, pre-human, and declares, "There is no hive of bees....that does not cry out against the mad mistake of confusing and confounding into likeness the distinct and differing functions, among which there is no unequalness that means inferiority." But in this example of the Bishop's own selection, do we discover a race of females subjected to males, and dependent upon their strength and activity for protection and support? Not a bit of it. If Nature has any sense of humor, she must have burst into inextinguishable laughter when the commonwealth of bees was selected as a model of Bishop Doane's ideal relation of the sexes. In that leaf from the book of Nature we find a hint of the infinite variety which distinguishes, alike, the sentiments and customs of the races of pre-human and human life. Just as some women are by nature

clinging, weak, dependent, and, therefore, willing to obey a master, so some female animals (as the seals, notoriously) are content to live in masses represented, defended and protected by one pugnacious male head. But the bee-hive is an equally notorious specimen of another variety, in which God has made the female self-supporting, self-protecting, self-governing and superior to the male! Here the sex feminine not only ably attends to the duties of motherhood—the care and nourishment of the young—but actually supports, protects and governs the adult male into the bargain!

The truth is that neither the book of Nature nor the books of human history establish the theory that the domestic and political functions of male and female are divided by a Creator into two sharply cleft classes. As we wander, reflectively, through the realm of Nature, we discern that now the male, and now the female, tenderly cares for the young and attends to the details of duty in "home, sweet home," or that, in some intelligent species, such duties are interchangeable. As a naturalist says, "Among the comparatively few fishes that take any care at all of their [young], the charge almost invariably falls to the share of the long-suffering male, whose partner, having laid the eggs, appears to think that she has done

quite enough in family matters, and is at full liberty to enjoy herself as she pleases." Nor is the care of the nursery confined to the males of the fish families. Among the great, strong, immensely muscular ostriches, it is the fond papa which lovingly nurses the baby ostriches, while mamma ostrich attends bird conventions, councils, or what-not, or roams about at her own sweet will. Three thousand years ago, the patient Job recorded that such was then "the divine plan" in the well-regulated ostrich family, and, apparently, ever since, the male ostrich has continued cradle-warming and infant tending, possibly as a much-needed lesson to the Bishop Doanes, who seem able to learn but little of the infinite variety of Nature. Moreover, the interchangeability of functions is by no means confined to species below mankind. We find indubitable evidence of men's participation in the affairs of the nursery, side by side with woman's participation in the affairs of the government political, among every race which has dwelt upon the globe. As the "harmony of nature and balance of the world" (concerning which Bishop Doane is now suffering uneasiness) was not destroyed or injured during the uncounted thousands of years in which primordial women shared in ecclesiastical and political government, and primordial man helped

to nurse the new-born baby,* what ground does Bishop Doane now find for apprehension that the equilibrium of the universe will be upset, if New York women are allowed to vote on politics and to enter the ministry of the Church ?

Not the faintest evidence is found that all males and all females of any class have ever unitedly rushed to perform exactly the same kind of social, political or ecclesiastical duties at one and the same time. Some women, like some men, are philosophers, some not ; some are public-spirited, some indifferent to public interests ; some inclined to matrimony, some averse to matrimony. Celibacy evidently originated among ants and bees, but it did not stop there. Thousands of male and female celibates have flourished in every race (alike among African Negro savages, Asiatic civilized dwellers in Pagan cities, and European and American Christians), refusing the duties of home-making and race-perpetuating, relegating those labors, indifferently, to any sort of human creatures disposed to take them up. Yet, whatever may be said of the quality, there seems never to have been a lack in the quantity of either homes or infants, because priestesses and priests, monks and nuns,

* See accounts of the custom known as the "Couvade," in Letourneau's "Evolution of Marriage," page 316 et seq.

deaconesses and lay-brothers eschew "holy matrimony" and turn their backs upon "the hearthstones of domestic peace." Surely this fact ought to contain comfort for Bishop Doane's agitated soul, and it should assure him that there is no danger of any unusual stampede from homes if the proportion of women who formerly became priestesses now choose to enter the ministry, to turn their attention to politics, or to become lawyers, doctors, mayors of cities or governors of states. In ancient Israel, Deborah was a commander-in-chief of the army (using her power so wisely that she maintained the only forty years of peace mentioned in that turbulent nation); Miriam was a political leader, jointly with Moses and Aaron; Huldah was a prophetess (preacher) and chief public counsellor of the king and high priest, and there were numerous queens and prophetesses of whom we have but scant mention. Notwithstanding that equality and likeness of function between Jewish men and women, happy homes existed in Israel, men and women loved each other, children were born and instructed according to the parents' best ability, and all went as well as was compatible with the ignorance which prevailed before the age of printing, travelling, and universal human communication. As far as we can judge from the imperfect records descending to

us, the worst evils among the Israelites seem to have arisen (about 450 B. C.) from that same false conception of life which led to the dark ages of Christendom, namely, masculine desire to conquer and rule women, and priestly desire to control the minds of the people. Bishop Doane says of the duties of life, "If it is God's work that is to be done, and each one is set to do our part of it, we are concerned to do it well." But he fails to perceive that if it *is* God's work that is to be done, and if each one of us is set by God to do his or her part of it, any dictation or interference from bishops, legislators, or other mere men, is pure impertinence and entirely uncalled for.

Gamaliel is said to have advised, concerning a certain so-called atheistic and anarchistic movement for liberty in Palestine, some 1800 years ago, "And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men and let them alone: for, if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but, if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, and, fighting against it, ye will be found fighting against God." Similar advice I would now give to those who oppose the perfect liberation of women from the traditions and the domination of men. It is thinkable that there may have been some good struck out of the evils both of human slavery and women slavery. But it is more probable that

both were fathomless blunders, begotten in ignorance, nursed in selfishness, and perpetuated in pure stupidity. As few Pharaohs, since the race of queens and kings was unluckily inaugurated, have relished the prospect of setting their subjects free, and, as subjection inevitably weakens the love of liberty natural to noblest human nature, it may be expected that active opposition and a dead weight of blind indifference will retard women's march toward freedom. The day of equal sovereignty, however, waits only for men's perception of the truth that the natural complement of a progressive man cannot be found in a subservient creature who spends her life grovelling upon her knees.

Social life is a common ministry, but it becomes a just, happy and dignified ministry only in proportion as it becomes purely voluntary; and no voluntariness is possible to women, unless they become equal sharers in the greatest range of freedom existing among the men of their community. When the question is fairly and fully tested, the world may, possibly, discover that all women really do prefer to confine their share of life's ministry to work exclusively within the four walls of their own homes, or of some Roman convent or Protestant cloistered deaconry. It is possible that the goal of women's desires

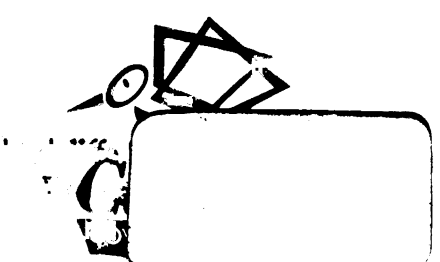
may be reached when life and the fullness thereof has become exclusively masculine, the feminine half of the race having voluntarily, and in full and deliberate intelligence, chosen the life-long semi-burial of the high caste women of India, Turkey, or convent-absorbed Christendom. It is possible that all women may even become too "modest and pure" to marry, and that, exhausted with men's abuse of womankind, and disgusted with a race so stupid that it is afraid to enjoy its own life, Madame Ackerman's prophecy (in "Pascal") may come true and mankind will say: "Our audacity at least shall save you from being born, you who still sleep in the depths of the future, and in ceasing to be we will triumph in having forced God to a finish with Humanity. Ah! what immense joy after so much suffering! Across the ruins, down on the charnel-house, to be able at last to hurl this cry of deliverance, 'No more men under heaven, we will be the last.'"

But, on the other hand, it is possible that men may arrive at the point of sanity which will enable them to perceive the presumptuous folly involved in their subjection of women. All branches of ministry—political, religious, industrial and domestic—must be widely and freely opened to this now subjected sex before home or conventual ministry can rise above

the rank of slavery. Not until the era of perfect freedom can woman's domestic ministry rise to the dignity of voluntary service.

If, as Bishop Doane now vehemently asserts, universal male suffrage is a failure, and female suffrage would be but aggravation of human misery under government through use of suffrage, then, by all means, let us unitedly labor for the abolishment of all suffrage and every pretense of officialised and enforced government. But, if the Bishop be mistaken, and the principle of universal male suffrage is to stand, then female suffrage must stand by it; for it is beyond question that men are unfit to rule women, since, as American municipalities now finally demonstrate, men have never yet displayed ability to do so much as properly govern even themselves. To truly govern is merely to guide. The two requisites of a guide are, knowledge of the way those who wish to be led want to go, and ability to lead by walking in that way. Men's notion of government seems to be, that those who assume to guide may force others to go in paths they do not choose, even while the self-constituted guides refuse to follow the course they seek to force upon others! This is doubtless why universal male suffrage is a failure, if, as the Bishop declares, it really is. Men have wasted their time in

voting that other people shall, or shall not, grow as naturally and freely as the commonwealth of ants, bees and birds, and have made an excessively foolish expenditure of effort in trying to compel womankind to walk according to men's will. Possibly the time has now arrived to abandon this some twenty-five-hundred-year-old experiment, which has been nothing but failure and that continually—that is, men's experiment in forcibly governing women.

The bestowal of the right of suffrage upon women, would not mean (under such national principles as ours) the right to interfere with the liberties of men. It would simply mean recognition of the truth that men have no moral right to interfere with the self-government of women. Americans gave the death-blow to the barbarous theory of government by use of physical force, when they proclaimed that no government is just unless it derives its powers from the consent of the governed. From that moment the subjection of women became a contravention of men's own principle of justice and a profound denial of men's own highest rule of moral conduct. If we believe that Justice, Morality, Truth, Right, are more than mere words of sounding brass, we cannot avoid the conclusion that the very stars in their courses fight against injustice, against the immorality of

professing one priciple and practicing its opposite, and against untruth and wrong. Over and over again, Nature has patiently demonstrated that freedom is better than slavery, that energy and activity repressed inevitably generate crime, mischief and evil rampant, and that love as a guiding power succeeds where force fails. Wise and happy will be that race which ultimately develops sufficient wit to comprehend Nature's oft-repeated, and many-formed, demonstration!